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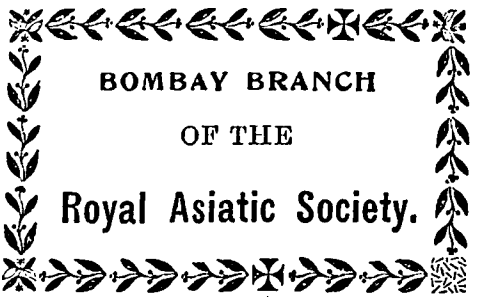

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AT HOME IN PARIS:

At Peace and at War.

BY

BLANCHARD JERROLD,

AUTHOR OF "THE CHILDREN OF LUTETIA," "THE GAVROCHE PARTY," ETC.

VOL. I.

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TO

MONSIEUR BÉBÉ,

THE SUNLIGHT OF OUR "HOME IN PARIS,"

This Book is Dedicated.

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AT HOME IN PARIS.

BOOK I.

AT PEACE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY: OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US.

THERE was a great crowd of market-people, fishwomen, *mobiles*, sedentary guards, refugees from beleaguered Paris, and English holiday-makers clustered about the great centre of news of Boulogne-sur-Mer, one early September morning, in the present year. Had Bazaine escaped? Were the Uhlans within sight of Mont Valérien? The stout *poissardes* elbowed themselves to the front, and then returned gesticulating and screeching their comments, while the cow-boys and

plough-boys merely continued to stare with a bovine, tranquil vacancy. Some said he well deserved it, some cursed the Prussians, and many of the women sighed "*Ce pauvre Empereur!*" Poor emperor indeed, as depicted in the window of the kind of cobbler's stall which serves for bureau to the *France du Nord*, and for the sale of the Paris papers. Not having received his customary parcel from the capital, the enterprising proprietor of the stall had filled his window with a copy of an English penny Illustrated Police Sheet. The picture at which the crowd was gazing, represented the French emperor seated in a prison-cell, exactly of the proportion and build of the condemned cell at Newgate, with formidable bars across a little window planted very high up in the wall. There was the jailer at the door, showing in the King of Prussia—very much as a turnkey admits a Middlesex magistrate to the presence of a highway robber. I had been thinking over the heads of a work on caricatures of the English by the French, and of the French by the

English; and having gone carefully over a collection which I had been forming during many years, I had come to the gratifying conclusion that there was the strongest evidence in it of a gradual improvement of feeling between the two nations. Not only an improvement in feeling, but an advance in knowledge one of the other. It is true that the English caricaturists show by far the greater progress in knowledge; but still, when the French caricatures of us which were perpetrated during the First Empire are compared with those which the Comte de Noé (Cham), Gavarni, Gustave Doré, and others have produced of late years, the progress is seen to be remarkable. Both Gavarni and Doré have studied us in our homes and streets. But how is it possible to believe that our knowledge of the French has penetrated far when such an abomination in art, such a misleading falsehood, as that which drew a crowd of the Boulonnais to stare, and exclaim and gesticulate, is marketable in England? I see that there are after all very few even among the wild and

old caricatures of our neighbours drawn by Rowlandson, the Cruikshanks, Gilray and others, that would not pass current among some classes of Englishmen even now. It is a disgrace to us that in these days, such a catchpenny pictorial falsehood as the sheet the Boulogne newsvendor exhibited to the Boulonnais, should emanate from our press Pitiful as art, it has yet unfortunately the power to do much mischief, especially among those classes of Frenchmen whose good feeling it is most important to cultivate.

The influence of the caricaturist on public opinion is wide spread, and at the same time, is lasting. A cartoon in *Punch* will have more effect on the public mind in regard to the question or event on which it is a pictorial comment, than a dozen leaders. In the same way, this mis-representation of the Emperor in a cell, and with the surroundings of an imprisoned footpad, will probably have conveyed to a large number of English people an impression that will last in their minds. They will always think of the French emperor after

the capitulation of Sedan, as a dilapidated general seated on a rush-bottomed chair at a deal table, and fed with bread and gruel. It is much to be lamented that such a false idea, such a bit of crass ignorance, has been made current. It is not so harmful as many of the coarse, violent, and ridiculous English caricatures of the French which were hawked about the country in Pitt's time; and in which "Boney" was served up hot and hot to minister to, and heat, the passions of the multitude. He is represented in every hateful and humiliating light. He is making his entry into the city on horseback with his back to the horse's head, and a halter round his neck. The triumphant British are giving it him on all sides. He and his soldiers and subjects—men, women and children—are scarecrows upon whom the uninformed malevolence of the caricaturist, is prodigally spent through a hundred barbarously coloured broadsheets. As Hans Breitmann says :—

> "Old men, and fraus, and kinder,
> Py dam dey catch it hot."

Our neighbours were not behindhand. They were quite up to our mark in ill-nature, and in many instances, beyond it, in their art. The Englishman with red hair, brutal jaw, equine teeth, and not trammelled in any of his proceedings by the commonest forms of polite society; was served up to the Parisians, in a long series of plates, a goodly bulk of which I have under my eye. Here is the Englishman's dinner-party. It is a scene of bestial drunkenness, which I cannot fully describe, and dare not copy as an example of the light in which our neighbours saw us some sixty years ago. A companion picture is the English lady's tea-party, in which our primness is not badly caught; and there is a point of observation which we can readily understand to have struck Frenchmen, and that is the fashion of having black men-servants. Here is Milor returning from the races. He is stretched at full length on the back of his exhausted horse, drunk. His dog is lying dead with fatigue, and the horse is dropping. But what cares he, is the comment under

the picture: he has won his bet! Then we find the Englishman in Paris, as a brute of the toughest skin, with his red hair and his grinning teeth, like those of a wild animal. There were no fire-engines in those days, and by law, when a fire happened, passers-by, between it and the water, were bound to make a *cordon*, and pass the buckets from hand to hand. I have myself seen such cordons at work. It was considered infamous in a man to avoid the service, and therefore natural in an Englishman to escape it, if he could. Hence, the caricaturist has drawn him surrounded by generous-hearted French citizens imploring him to be a party to this Christian act; but he only shows his big teeth, and refuses. Horace Vernet's military caricature is of a gentler and more refined description. The fat English officer and the lean one, are excellent studies; as excellent in their way, as Doré's *Anglais à Mabille*. Some grotesque representations of English officers, volunteers, Highlanders, or *Higlanders*, as the Parisians will call them, which I have collected of

late years, are infinitely more exaggerated, are farther from that basis of truth, which is the starting-point of the real caricaturist—than the First Empire plates to which I have referred. And the reason is obvious. The drawing of a Highlander in the picture of a Scotch family, is the original of the rough water-colour studies, which I bought only a year or two since on the Boulevards. The same observation applies to recent caricatures of British officers. They are only recent exaggerations of old caricatures, that were based on actual observation. Details which were true in Vernet's young day, are blunders and falsehoods when set down in grotesque presentments of the English officer of to-day. In all those which I have collected, he is drawn—to take only a single point—wearing immense epaulettes. This remark holds good of most of the caricatures of English women. The same long-necked, stiff-backed, prim, sneering creature; with thin curls reaching past the long face to the waist; serves the popular French artist for his

stock Englishwoman. The indubitable fact is that French contemporary caricaturists, with the two exceptions I have already mentioned, have not observed for themselves. They know very little more of us than the French journalists, as a class, know. They cannot avoid seeing a few hundreds of our countrymen and countrywomen in the western parts of Paris, during the excursion season, and they pick up bits of costume from them. But this is all the knowledge they are at the pains of collecting for themselves. Unfortunately figures of Englishmen and Englishwomen enter an appearance on the Boulevard des Italiens, the like of whom, it would be difficult to match in an ordinary walk at the west end of London, or, indeed, at any end of London. Why the specimens presented to French caricaturists are uncouth abnormal items of our population, I will not pretend to determine. But any English reader who has lived in Paris, will bear me out that this is a true statement.

Parallel blunders and misrepresentations,

the result of faulty and insufficient observation, are to be found without seeking far, in London. We have our stage Frenchman, and he is of as old-fashioned a type as the Englishman who serves as a low comedy figure on the French stage. For instance, the Frenchman drawn by Mr. George Cruikshank, and the Frenchmen of the early days of *Punch*, before Leech appeared in the plenitude of his power; are as false to nature, as even a barbarously rendered series of caricatures of the English, which I picked up some six or seven years ago, printed upon some common dinner plates in the market-place at Dieppe. That Mr. Cruikshank's Frenchmen have little or no relation to nature, is no severe reflection on his genius. Mr. Cruikshank has not observed for himself, but has been content to adopt the old types of the artists who immediately preceded him. Between them and him and Leech and Doyle, and we may add Du Maurier, there is an immense stretch; just as there is between Doré and the French caricaturists of the beginning of the century.

In the recent caricatures of the two nations, whose alliance has been so unfortunately sundered, there is, both in the good and the bad; in those based on actual observation, and those derived from old models; at any rate, an improved feeling. Leech quizzes the Paris *bourgeois* about his vehement angling for minnows. Doré rallies the Englishman on his superb and lofty airs of superiority; amid the frivolities of Mabille. In recent French caricatures of our military, it is the strut and simper which furnish the fun.

To see ourselves as others see us, is useful. The view is hopeful also, when we can distinctly trace, almost year by year, the growth of a better knowledge and of kindlier sentiments, covering traditional animosities; for in this growth, lies the best assurance of complete peace and goodwill, between the two leading nations of the earth, in the future.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOUSE WE LIVED IN.

IT could not strictly be called a house we lived in—it was a city, and a prodigiously populous one. Life teemed in every part of it—rolled in a torrent down its staircases, jutted out of every window. Neither by day nor by night did universal rest prevail in it. It included picturesque contrasts of fortune and misfortune; of breathless industry and languid idleness; of robust health, and lives that were a long disease. The seven ages of man were illustrated on every floor of it. It swarmed with children: it could have peopled three or four schools with ease, and left quite enough

infants behind for the comfort of the adult population. The animals that barked, and mewed, and screeched, and sang in it, would have been a good stock-in-trade for an animal fancier. To a quiet, uninitiated visitor it was a chaotic maze. The passage by which he entered was a bustling scene. It was as public as the street, and looked more like a narrow thoroughfare than a way into a house. The wall was pierced, right and left, with doors innumerable: a butcher peeped out of one; from a second, a woman issued loaded with cooked dishes, more or less savoury; a third door led to a wine-shop billiard-table; and a fourth was the entrance to the establishment of a herbalist. Passing these few units of the vast population of our house, our visitor reached a door on the left that opened into the dark *conciergerie*. *Concierges'* boxes are usually gloomy; but that in which our Cerberus lived was in perpetual twilight. Indeed, the only light that came to it, was a gleam which shot down the high shaft at the side that went to the roof of the house. Our

visitor would probably find nobody in the *concierge's* box; but Madame was close at hand under the shaft, and by a crazy pump; giving her close attention, on her knees, to the proceedings of the rats, which she was at liberty to observe through an opening by the pump, that led direct to the sewers. Whether she was an humble naturalist, given to the contemplation of the black and slimy quadrupeds who inhabited the sewers by troops, and kept high revels there under our house; or whether, seeing how frequently lodgers were frightened on the staircases by rat-revels in the dead of night, she had been exasperated into a rage that knew no sleep, I was never able to discover. But this is truth; winter and summer did that patient *concierge* devote hours, gazing down that same sewer. She would allow nothing to impede her view; for when, in the depth of a severe winter, the aperture was covered with ice, she made the ice give way under her vigorous fists. She would just be good enough to divert her attention for a

few moments, to confer with the postman, or answer the inquiries of our visitor. He was to pass the establishment of the photographer and the lodging of the *Sage-Femme*, on the *entresol*, and so reach that stage of dignity in the house—the first floor, where, flanked by a few families, we dwelt. A regiment of dragoons must have lived immediately over our heads, and must have worn their heaviest boots at home for our especial benefit. They made the mirrors shake against the walls. They were given to playing on the drum. At ghostly hours in the night, they stamped home, and, by way of exercise before going to bed, appeared to select the weightiest articles of furniture in their room for removal to the opposite corner of the room to that in which they found them. They were not only heavy and noisy themselves, but appeared to select their friends for the force of their lungs and the weight of their tread. The only instrument that discoursed sweet music in their ear was the drum. Now, in the beating of the drum, there is the roll, the swell, the flam, and

the ruffle. They were masters of them all. These were one set of our lodgers overhead, in their normal condition. Noise, and noise only, was their delight. When, on a certain evening, it was whispered through the cavernous passages of our interminable house that Monsieur Rataplan, of the second floor, was going to receive some friends in his studio, his immediate neighbours—above and under and about him—began to make all kinds of preparations, and assume those various attitudes of firmness which travellers by sea adopt, when the captain shakes his head, and says there is wind in the clouds. We all felt inclined to réef sail, clear decks, and make every thing taut and trim for a hurricane. Our preparations were not in vain. Monsieur Rataplan did ample justice to his reputation. Morhoff mentions a certain Dutchman, of the name of Petter, who could break a glass with the sound of his voice: Rataplan must have had Petter among his guests. He was a man who must have been after Rataplan's own heart. It is my belief that he came to the

famous *soirée* in question, accompanied by the Swiss giantess, who was at that period exhibiting her redundant flesh at the great *Café* by the *Chateau d'Eau*. Now, Rataplan was an artist, and a lame artist; yet he was a man of most diabolical activity. We had been long in bed, and M. Rataplan had, I am sure, quite satisfied himself that we were fast asleep, when it occurred to his fertile imagination that a grand galop, provided it was danced by the heaviest of his guests, would be refreshing. In that dance the Swiss giantess stamped her hardest, while Petter put his reputation to the test, in the chorus. Our rooms vibrated like a ship in a heavy sea. Our neighbours met, in various stages of *demi-toilette*, to decide what could possibly be the nature of the entertainment that was proceeding on the second floor; and whether the house would be likely to last to the end of it. I am not sure that the more timid among the ladies did not deem it an act of prudence to shore up the more precious articles of their furniture. While a conference was proceeding on our floor, a

scout perceived with consternation that all Monsieur Rataplan's visitors had not yet arrived. The thud of footsteps coming up the stairs, and the various preliminary flourishes of song in which the new arrivals indulged, warned us that the revel had not yet reached its height. In about half an hour a series of unearthly noises, as of souls in agony, with demons laughing at and applauding them, struck upon the appalled ear. Monsieur Rataplan was having some private theatricals. I confess that we were all lost in conjecture as to the piece he had selected. The plot, however, must have included the destruction of a considerable quantity of heavy furniture; and some diabolical cruelties must have been practised upon the heroine, since she indulged in a series of sharp screams, of a quality so piercing that the east wind has ever since sounded low in my ears, like the humming of a bee. The storm was at its worst in the small hours; and so fearfully did it rage, that some timid ladies, who were won't to live on the quiet banks of the

Lake of Como, rang, in their terror, for the *concierge*. This official, who appeared in a white sugar-loaf nightcap, agreed with the dwellers by the placid lake, that M. Rataplan's guests were not quite so quiet as they might be.

"Quiet!" exclaimed one of the ladies. "It must be a room full of madmen!"

The *concierge* smiled; holding the ladies, doubtless, to be very indifferent judges of what a noisy batchelor's party was, sometimes, at the height of the Carnival. He comforted them, however, by assuring them that M. Rataplan was in the habit of shaking the house to that extent only once in the year. This was very certain, namely, that in no month of the year was it the habit of M. Rataplan to be a quiet lodger. He rudely tried our nerves on many occasions; how then must it have fared with two poor creatures who had one room on his floor—and next to his studio?

Madame Gasparin: who and what was she? The *concierge* knew very little, or nothing

about her; and a middle-aged woman of Spanish extraction, who had a room somewhere in the maze we inhabited, and farmed some of the sets of apartments, and devoted all her spare time to the busy transaction of other people's business; had been baffled at every point, in her attempts to storm the silent citadel in which Madame Gasparin lived. Being unsuccessful in the region of facts, the lady of Spanish extraction, Madame Dolores, spread her wings in the ambient air of fiction. Here she revelled. It should be remarked that, when the secretiveness of a lodger gave impulse to her imagination, her fiction was of a damaging and somewhat acrid description. Madame Gasparin's history was speedily set forth, and cruelly as speedily. She was, of course, *bien peu de chose*. She had very little money. Her husband was a mystery; but there could be no mistake about the poor girl who lived with her being her daughter. The mother had been a lady's maid in some second-rate family. Her daughter had a certain mysterious air of dis-

tinction about her—a look of blood which Madame Dolores would not take upon herself to explain. Nothing, however, could be more plebeian than the mother's face. She looked like the daughter of a *garde champêtre* at most. Madame Dolores shook her swarthy head, saying, "We know what the fate of a lady's maid usually is."

And so she settled accounts with Madame Gasparin. I think that Mademoiselle Gasparin disarmed even the tongue of Madame Dolores. The poor girl was, when we entered the house, in the later stage of a rapid consumption. It was startling to meet her on the stairs—a little white ghost of a creature, with a wan smile, and bright, dark, tender eyes. She looked so light and frail, and was so weak, that it appeared as though the softest wind could carry her from the earth. She wore a close snow-white cap tied under her pointed chin. Poor gentle loiterer by an open grave, not even the tongue of Madame Dolores, I am sure, could wag against thee! Did M. Rataplan know that Mademoiselle Gasparin

was lying waiting for her rest in the next room to him, when he woke the echoes of the night in his studio? He must have met her, leaning on her mother's arm, many a time and oft; he must have seen her gliding like one of the "sheeted dead," into the humble room her mother hired in the corner of the lobby; but this system of living in a hive makes the inhabitant of each cell a very selfish animal. Every lodger steels himself against complaints from fellow lodgers, and strives to cheat himself into the belief that he is as independent of them as though he inhabited a Caprera of his own.

He who endeavours to act as an independent human being, while he is merely the occupant of an apartment in a house like ours, drives his head against a stone wall: A little latitude is permitted to him during the Carnival, but he must be good enough to put on his chains on Ash Wednesday! He may be the soul of harmony until midnight, but at that hour he must be as quiet as the Sphynx. His fellow-lodgers will knock at the walls, or

against the ceiling, should he touch a musical instrument after midnight. I am sure he would not be permitted, in our house, to murmur his inspiration on the piccolo, in the small hours. He may be a nuisance to his neighbours, but he must be offensive within the law. Now, there was nothing to be said against M. Rataplan's inveterate habit of rolling his heavy furniture over our heads, after midnight. He was *dans son droit.* But had he, in an evil hour, touched his drum, even in a muffled state, I might have skipped off to the *concierge* and poured a just complaint into his ear. Neither he nor I would be allowed to keep friends in our rooms, dancing until two or three in the morning. Once or twice, at long intervals, I might hold a dancing *soirée,* and trespass beyond midnight; but not oftener. Have I not some friends who are, at this very moment, removing their household gods, because their landlord will not allow them to remain under his roof, unless they will promise him faithfully to turn away their guests at midnight?

I have hinted at a few of the trades that are carried on in our house—but at a few of them only. And I have not yet touched upon the professions we muster. A French writer has recently called Paris, Pianopolis, and has declared that the city is not made of houses, but of pianos. He calls his own dwelling a *piano à cinq étages!* Five stories high our house was, certainly—not a five-storied piano; it was a band and chorus. Every kind of instrument was played within its walls. We were fortunate enough to have a *prima donna* on the first floor, who dwelt in a small apartment with any number of her family who happened to be in Paris. When the Signorina Tollolli was not consuming prodigious quantities of maccaroni, she was tripping up and down the scales with a voice that rang through the house. When the *Signorina* was not practising her scales, she was receiving sections of an inexhaustible list of Italian friends and acquaintances. They came in every description of quaint and queer costume. The anteroom was full of brigands' high-pointed head-

gear, wide-awakes, and chimney-pot hats of strange proportions. The overcoats, the furs, the mufflers, lay about in picturesque confusion; and diffused a strong odour of stale tobacco. Every visitor came with a snatch of song in his throat. Instruments of all descriptions were tuned in the ante-room. Duets, quartetts, quintetts, burst upon the ear, at every hour in the day. One morning it was whispered that the first *trombone* of the opera had come to pay his respects to the *Signorina*, in the company of the renowned tenor, who had made such a great sensation in Valparaiso the year before last. It was even surmised, that if the *Signorina's* neighbours hushed themselves into a death-like silence, and listened intently, they might be gratified by catching a few stray notes of the voice that, only four-and-twenty months ago, charmed the natives of Valparaiso. The *Signorina* lived in perpetual expectation of visits from the Bagiers and the Gyes. Her friends appeared to watch the opera-houses for her with the most praiseworthy vigilance.

For a considerable time, the siege was planned and laid to the Italian Opera. The *Signorina* commanded in person, and threw out scouts, and watched the weak points of the citadel, with indefatigable industry. All the singers who were actually in the pay of Bagier, were regarded as the enemy; therefore, every misfortune that happened to any one of them, elicited a cheer from the brave soldiers of the *Signorina.* There was great excitement in the *Signorina's* camp one morning, when a spy came in with the intelligence that the new soprano had broken down entirely. Congratulations were offered by every description of bearded Italian;—by a "robust tenor," by the third violin, by the profound bass, and finally, by a most mysterious coffee-coloured gentleman, whose whole duty in life appeared to consist in running messages for the *Signorina's* mother; and whose slender claim to distinction was, that he was the brother-in-law of Madame Bulberini, the mighty *tragédienne* of Florence. I never knew this mysterious gentleman's name. To us, and to all the

house, he was ever known as the brother-in-law of Madame Bulberini. On the ground of this relationship, he was a presence in the little *salon* of the *Signorina*. It was understood that the great *tragédienne* was building a palace on one of the new Boulevards, and that her brother-in-law had been left in Paris in order to superintend the work. He was especially excited when it appeared probable that the *Signorina* would make a triumphant entry into the opera, over the body of the poor singer who had ignominiously fallen. The *Signorina* had the fine blood of Rome in her veins; and it mantled to her cheek when the trombone made his bow to her, and the third fiddle drew a picture of Bagier humbly lying at her feet. The little coffee-coloured man danced and sang round the Roman lady, who stood in a majestic attitude of triumph, pointing to her slippers, which the humble director of the *Italiens* was to come presently and kiss. The *Signorina* had quite made up her mind that she would ask heavy terms, if only to punish the director for his past neglect.

Had he not been rude enough to call on her before his season began? Had he not applauded her singing, and told her she should hear of him in a day or two; and had he not gone direct away from her rooms to call on Scagliogla, who was, by countless degrees, her inferior?

The breach in the citadel, however, was repaired somehow before the *Signorina* had enforced homage from M. Bagier. When this became known, our floor was once more invaded by the same file of Italians of brigand aspect, who had waited on the *prima donna* with their premature congratulations. They now came to offer their expressions of sympathy, and to afford the *Signorina* consoling instances of great singers who had remained unappreciated for years; but had at last triumphed over the ignorance and malevolence of opera directors, and had reigned as queens, where they had failed as supplicants. The *Signorina*, truth to add, was quite able to furnish, from her own stock of well-assorted vanities, all the balm necessary to the healing of the

wound. It was, indeed, a treat to hear her use the undoubted dramatic force she possessed, at the expense of the soprano who had been preferred to her. She mimicked her rival's angular attitudes, and imitated all her vocal imperfections with surprising ease and crispness. Being a Roman *Signorina*, our disappointed neighbour could not take her discomfiture calmly. She flew from one set of lodgers to a second, telling her tale, and expending upon the narrative so much energetic gesticulation, that we expected every hour to hear she had been carried exhausted to her couch.

"Do you know, Monsieur," she would begin, "that the learned director of the Italian Opera has strengthened his company by the addition of the Signorina Scagliogla? The director has discovered that I am not to be mentioned in the same breath with her."

Then rubbing her hands, as though they had not quite made up their mind whether they would grasp a dagger or a pistol; and setting her face into a smile more horrible

than any frown, our *Signorina* continued—"The director ought to know—he ought to be an authority on who sings false, and who doesn't. Yes, yes; he is perfectly right! All the world knows by this time that *la* Scagliogla is a better singer than I am—is a better actress, is younger, is more likely to please. However, I'm very glad she has got the engagement. Poor girl! I believe they had hardly bread to eat!"

Now, it would have gone very ill with the director of the opera, or with the poor Scagliogla, if either one or the other, or both, had come within reach of the noble *prima donna* while her disappointment was fresh in her mind. She was somewhat ceremonious with us; but the rank and file of her Italian acquaintances had a slight taste of her ladyship's quality. Tito, Gigi, and the rest, got short sharp answers, and were speedily sent about their business. The *Signorina* took some time to cool, and I don't think she would have been quite herself again so soon as she actually was, had there not been, amid the troops of neg-

lected musical geniuses who frequented her *salon*, a sentimental student of the *Conservatoire*—a Frenchman. This sentimental young Parisian paid amorous attentions to the *Signorina*, with a light and easy manner that sat gracefully enough upon him. The lady's Roman blood was quickly inflamed; she listened and believed. Now the Frenchman was making love, rather to show what a *spirituel* fellow he was, and how he could turn his sentences, than with any serious matrimonial intentions. His compliments were deftly turned and administered at the right moment, and the lady's greedy ear received them, and her heart treasured them. The *Signorina* was in downright earnest from the first, and told her female friends that she loved as they loved at Rome. She was all fire, and animated with a faith and simplicity that were almost childlike. He was amusing his leisure, airing his powers of pleasing, and warming his vanity pleasantly by the ardour he had inspired in a handsome and accomplished woman.

The *Signorina* so openly expressed her gratification at the lightest attention she received, and wore her heart, with a grace so infantile, on her sleeve, that her lover very soon took alarm, and expressed his surprise that the young lady should be so very fond of him. The fact was, he was surprised to find all those empty words of his had fallen by accident on an ear that had not been tuned in Paris. His phrases had been believed by a simple Italian child of song; and there he was, to his undisguised astonishment, lord and master of a heart which he was hardly prepared to possess.

The *Signorina* was, as the reader has seen, sharp enough when her interests as a singer were in question, but she was a very child nevertheless: a dangerous child to trifle with, *Monsieur le Français*, with that Roman blood of hers coursing in her veins!

It may occur to the reader to ask himself how I obtained all these details of the lives, and sentiments, and ambitions of the inmates of the House we Lived In. It argues in the

reader who has put himself this question, a complete ignorance of the terms on which the many inmates of a large Paris house sometimes live. The floors drift into an acquaintance with each other. Children on the third floor fall ill, and a mother on the first floor asks tenderly after them. Neighbours meet day after day on the common staircase, or at the *concierge's* door. In short, the notices of marriages that are posted against the walls of the twenty arrondissement *Mairies*, are convincing evidence of the facility with which French people living in the same house, become acquainted with one another. I am inclined to hold that at least twenty per cent. of the marriages that take place in Paris, are between people who have come together accidentally by happening to take rooms in the same house. In every list of names and addresses of people about to be married, we find a "*Monsieur un tel*," of blank number, blank street, to "*Mademoiselle une telle, même maison.*" It is impossible to remember how any of our neighbours became acquainted

with each other, and I expect that the only person in the house who had the histories of these intimacies at her finger's end, was Madame Dolores, whose gaze nothing could escape, and whose tongue discussed every thing on which her vigilant eye had rested.

It came to our knowledge that a widow lady and her daughter, who lived together, were in comfortable circumstances, and had been better off in former days; but that they had never moved in other than commercial society. We knew that they were in the habit of taking bran baths, and that they got them cheap at their bathing establishment by taking an *abonnement*, and providing their own towels. They had not many friends left in their retirement, we knew also, because only two little bags of sweetmeats were left for them on New Year's day. They appeared to be, in short, almost as lonely as the photographer on the *entresol*.

"That man has a history in which much mystery is included," said the *Signorina*, as she stood with folded arms, peering from her

little *salon* window, through the glass roof of the photographer's operating room. From her post of observation she could survey, at her ease, the artist labouring at his profession. Poor fellow! He had little enough to do: his sitters were few and far between. In vain he rubbed his camera, and disposed the draperies for backgrounds. In vain he polished and re-polished the little squares of glass on which he fondly hoped to cast perfect negatives. Few and far between were the sitters still. The artist wandered up and down his desolate studio, quiet and resigned, waiting for the better days. From time to time, a lady, dingily but neatly attired, appeared, and went nimbly searching about for things that must be put in order. In this search she would occasionally include the artist's slouched hat, and his cravat that was always awry; and inasmuch as she often included a kiss in these delicate attentions, we concluded that the lady was his wife. Now and then, on *fête* days, the frames of specimens which were hung at the door of our house, would attract a few

holiday people to enter the studio, tempted by the modesty of the artist's pecuniary demand. It was rather painful amusement to watch the busy business-like air the photographer and his wife would at once assume. It was their obvious wish to convey to their sitters an idea that they were overwhelmed with customers. The adoption of this not very sinful deceit was simply an acknowledgement of the world's worship of success. Had they told their sitters that the *atelier* was nearly always empty, and that they had been sitting many days waiting for a customer, even the few holiday folk who had wandered to them would have shunned them.

The *Signorina* was quite right. There *was* a mystery about the photographer—a mystery, indeed, that might have rewarded the attention of the younger Dumas. The photographer was a baron in disguise, neither more nor less—an ogre of a baron who had eaten all his money. That lady in the dingy attire was, then, the baroness! The *entresol* believed that the baron had wasted his substance at

Baden-Baden and at Homburgh, with a camellia lady. The first floor pooh-poohed this explanation of the noble photographer's downfall. He had gambled on the Bourse; and on that memorable day when, contrary to the anticipation of every stock-jobber, the news of peace, after the Crimean war, sent down the funds; he had lost every *franc*, every *liard* he had in the world. The second floor could never be brought to believe that the baron ever had two five-franc pieces to rattle against each other. The *Signorina* held the question to be so important, that she took an early opportunity of having a serious conversation with Madame Dolores on the subject. Madame at once owned that she knew much more than she was permitted to divulge. There could be no doubt about it; she had it from the very best authority. M. Ambroise was a baron. She had seen some of his old cards. He still received letters from time to time from a few of his old friends, who sympathized with him in his misfortune; and among these were two marquises and a duke,

whose names she could mention if she chose. Madame Dolores' method of replying to the questions of the *Signorina* were highly tantalizing to this lady. In vain did the *prima donna* assure Madame Dolores that the baron's secret would be safe in her keeping. Madame was too old a hand in a Paris house to be snared in this way. The baron's secret should die with her, said she; and should she in very truth, carry it to her grave, I make bold to predict it will be the only one that she will take with her.

In a house like ours, marriages, births, and deaths jostle one another so frequently,—the pastrycook carrying the wedding-breakfast so narrowly escapes upsetting the bearer of funeral baked meats, on the staircase,—that every lodger becomes a selfish kind of philosopher, and is not extremely disturbed by hearing the rattle in the throat of his next-door neighbour. On a certain winter's night, a noble group of feminine gossips had trickled from various *appartements* on the first floor, into the little *salon* of the *Signorina*.

It was a very wintry night, indeed, when the wind had a razor edge, and the snow drifted in huge leaden volumes of cloud overhead. The ladies were sitting closely round the crackling logs, talking of the parties they had been at, and the parties to which they were invited; seasoning their discourse, it is almost superfluous to add, with a plentiful supply of scandal. The *sirops* of Madame G—— had been condemned as execrable, and it had been unanimously admitted that it was a great pity Madame F—— permitted her daughter to sing before company; when the *Signorina's* mother cut in with this careless remark,—

"By the way, how is poor Mademoiselle Gasparini this afternoon?"

"How is she, dear mother," the *Signorina* answered, with a little surprise in her tone; "why, she has been dead three-quarters of an hour."

The young lady leant towards the mantelpiece, to be quite sure of the hour, in the winter twilight.

"Yes," she added; "just three-quarters of

an hour. She died at four o'clock, and it now wants exactly a quarter to five." Hearing the hour, one of the ladies jumped up from her seat, and saying, "Dear me, I ordered dinner at half-past four," sailed, with many courtesies, from the *salon*.

CHAPTER III.

OUR CONCIERGE.

"CORDON, S'IL VOUS PLAÎT!" Be polite to the *concierge* under all circumstances. You are in his hands. He keeps watch over you. He receives all your letters, sees all your friends, your tradesmen, and your creditors. He marks the hours at which you come and go. He knows when you have a new coat, and what you do with the old one. Observe, that he has nothing to do in the world (if he be in a good house) except to make notes from that little window, whence he surveys the world that passes to and fro. It is he who answers all questions that may be addressed to

him by your friends, or enemies, concerning you. You are only the first-floor lodger, but he is *concierge;* and he will have you mark the difference in your relative positions. You may fret, but you cannot escape him. When he pulls the cord, you must accept the act as a favour which he has been gracious enough to pay you. There is not a man with whom you are acquainted whose name is not familiar to him. All your little ailments are at his fingers' ends. If he had a good memory, a fair notion of style and orthography, he might write romances that would pale the star of the author of "La Femme de Trente Ans." His malicious eye marks who comes when Monsieur is out. He knows when to put a pecuniary expression into his slavish countenance. Monsieur de Vandenesse is understood by the *concierge*, when the Marquis is all confidence. The Marquise d'Aiglemont could not have defied the vengeance of the man in the little dark room, by the gateway of her hotel. Irreproachable himself, he sits in his sombre little cabin—as judge in a court

of justice. He knows that those scandalous romancists of the Boulevards write severe things about him. They call him *mouchard;* but he smiles, and counts his hundred-sous pieces; and as he drops them in the leather bag, he grins—thinking of the time when some of these gentlemen will be lying in the hospital—ay, possibly lapping the soup of Bicêtre; and he will be *rentier*, and will follow his daughter in her wedding dress to the Bois de Boulogne, having given her a pretty *dot.* He has bought *Rentes* already—trust him. His five-franc pieces were at the disposition of his country during the Crimean war; and the people laughed to see him counting them out. The *placement* was highly advantageous, it is true; but, he trusted, people would give him a little credit for patriotism.

His prying habits apart, the *concierge* is what we call a respectable man. He is always at his post. He is bountifully civil. He is ever faithful to his trust. You will not often see a *concierge* before the Correctional Police. The extent of his dissipation is an occasional *coup*

at the nearest wine-shop, with a neighbour. On fine evenings he sits under the gateway, with his wife and her friend, lazily watching the passers-by. In the winter he is shut, with his wife and the same friend (a neighbouring cook or housemaid), in his steamy den. It is gloomily lighted by an oil lamp, with a green shade over it. On a shelf, by the table, lie the letters of the lodgers. Against the wall are rows of keys, which open the various apartments of the house. The den is packed with every kind of bundle, domestic utensil, and package; and overhead is a bed, that is let down on the floor at night. The wife and her friend knit and talk scandal; and the *concierge*, with the cordon at hand, reads the evening paper, and gives forth the news—when he is in an amiable mood. He is a philosopher, whom nothing moves. He has seen every phase of life. Weddings and funerals by the hundred; domestic quarrels, executions, ruin, extraordinary strokes of luck, love, jealousy, despair—all pass by that little square window of his. How often has he

helped to hang the black cloth across the gateway; and to arrange the tapers round the coffin in the passage, within view of the people in the street, that these might enter and sprinkle holy water on the dead! I remember one frosty December morning (many years have flown since then) I was the proud inhabitant of rooms on the first floor of a student's hotel, in the Rue des Quatre Vents. Those four winds blew no good to anybody. Fate had hit a knock-down blow at every inhabitant of that street. It was the street of the great Paris family of the Empty Pockets. The morning was icy, and a keen wind blew through the long dusty passage that led to the street. I had a word to say to the *concierges* —man and wife. They had made mistakes with my letters, and had given some of my newspapers to the second floor. As I passed hurriedly to the stifling little place where the *concierge* and his wife were rubbing their lean knees over a stifling little stove, I almost fell over a long box (very like an orange box), that was propped on end, as a

ladder, or a plank of timber, against the wall.

I made my complaint, and was met with that crushing and unanswerable humility for which my Quatre-Vents *concierges* were remarkable. Poverty is, to most people, a break in the encampment that lets in a pack of wolves upon them. To my humble *concierges* it was impenetrable armour.

"We are so poor, you see, sir," said they, whenever I opened a complaint. "We are very sorry; but we are poor people." Impossible to be angry with people who clasped your knees. On that December morning I had determined to be firm.

"This is unendurable! Once more, my papers!"

"You must really excuse any thing this morning, sir; especially with poor people, who do their best."

"And why this morning?" I answered. "To begin with, I nearly broke my shins over a great deal box you have planted halfway across the passage."

"That, sir—why it's Mademoiselle Lucille!"

I had stumbled against a coffin—containing the remains of a lodger whom I had seen day after day drawing water at the fountain opposite my window—at the moment when preparations were making for an humble lying-in-state under the gateway.

I was silenced; and suffered henceforth the blunders of the poor *conciergerie* without complaint. I have no doubt now, having at any rate the years that bring the philosophical mind, those artful Quatre-Vents *concierges* are *rentiers;* and helped his late Imperial Majesty to realise those millions which "the prosperity of the Empire" compelled him to borrow.

The privileges of the *concierge* are bearable. Let him take the biggest log when you are supplied with half a load of wood. You pay him the expected gratification when you return home after midnight. You cannot help the fast friendship that springs up between him and your cook. He must know when the price of peaches is low enough for your

pocket; and that you quarrelled with the cobbler over his charge for mending your shoes. Every detail of your contract with the *traiteur* is his property. You drink Bordeaux at twenty sous the *litre*, and he knows it; and it is only when you have friends, you go even as far as Beaune. The fowls are too dear in the market to-day for Madame; the cook has told him so with a toss of the head; and he holds that you are *bien peu de chose*. A friend out at elbows has paid you a visit; and went out arm-in-arm with you, and *tu-toied* you. The landlord has called three times for his rent. It is the privilege of the *concierge* to be posted up in the doings of the back staircase, and of the front staircase of your establishment. You furnish Sunday afternoon conversation to him and his friends.

The oyster-woman, who sits with her fish securely packed in straw, waiting for customers at the corner of the street, elbow to elbow with the vendor of roasted chestnuts—this buxom old lady, who has the firmest thumb I ever saw engaged opening an oyster; has been

in this street of the fashionable west of Paris (to which I have promoted myself from the Quatre-Vents) these five-and-twenty years. Rubbing her back against the corner-stone of the Rue de Grevuhle, this observant creature heard the murderous thunders of the days of July; caught the droning of "Mourir pour la Patrie," in 1848; and surveyed the effervescence of the *coup-d'état*—opening oysters with that thumb of majestic force the while! She is here still, busy, talkative, and as receptive as ever in beleaguered Paris. She is the chosen confidante of all the cooks and *concierges* in the street. Under that snow-white cap of hers lie, snugly and tightly packed, the archives of every kitchen in the faubourg. Every hint, every rumour, falls into her net. She can exchange a joke with a *moblot*. Her lively eyes are upon every man, woman, and child in the street.

Cook, to Madame. "Madame Buisson is enchanted with your new dress, Madame. She saw you in it yesterday for the first time."

Madame. "I'm delighted to hear that I have pleased Madame Buisson, Clemence; but, pray, who is Madame Buisson?"

Clemence makes a theatrical start, and will not believe that Madame can be ignorant of the name of Madame Buisson. "Why, Madame," cries Clemence, "she has been in the street twenty-five years."

Madame. "Possibly; but what is she?"

Clemence. "Why, Madame, the oyster-woman at the corner of the Rue de Grevuhle."

No *concierge* would deprive himself of the pleasure and profit of Madame Buisson's acquaintance. Nor would the lady think for one moment of shortening her supply of scandal, by offending a man who held the key of a house.

My west-end *concierge* was one of Madame Buisson's intimates. I lived in a very short street, and from my balcony I could distinctly see all that was passing in it. When I threw the windows open in the early morning, the *concierge* was cooling his feverish nose on the doorstep; or talking with the man who was taking down the shutters of his favourite

wine-shop, where he had just sipped his "morning's refresher." He would sit on the form by the wine-shop door, and cast his bleared eyes over the great house opposite, that was his domain.

I felt that his eye rested occasionally upon me, and that I must be on my best behaviour. He was an excellent sample of the *concierge*, dressed in a very short, square cut, dress coat, of a mouldy greenish hue; a waistcoat, brightened with metal buttons; blue trousers, and, in the early morning, sabots. A snuff-brown baggy cap covered his wise head, with the peak of it put sideways, that it might not impede his observations. There were not many variations in his morning performance. He had a greeting with the wood and coke merchant, who was stacking logs in his black shed. The baker halted with the loaves towering far above his head, to exchange news. The patient *auvergnat*, ambling along with his cans of water slung across his shoulder, answered his morning pleasantry; for, by the laughter, my *concierge* could say good things,

—at least he laughed at them very much himself, and appeared to be rewarded from time to time with a *coup*, offered to him by some grateful friend of the street. It was worth an hour spent on my balcony to see the Rabelaisian content and chuckle with which, when invited to the pewter bar, he followed his entertainer; and the *bonhomie* with which he slapped his momentary host on the back as they came forth, after a few minutes, and he resumed his seat on the form. We used to call him the Spider. He caught many flies in the course of the morning, when he was not called from his post by the piercing voice of his better-half, summoning him across the road, to perform some duty of his responsible office. When he was so summoned, he would put on a grave, magisterial air, directly draw the cuff of his coat across his Bacchanal lips, set the peak of his cap in a becoming position, and, summoning to his aid every scrap of dignity at his command, make across the road to see who was at the gates of his kingdom.

In his way, the *concierge* was a *bon vivant;*

but never did he permit his love of the good things of this world to interfere with the scrupulous performance of his official duties. He was as severe as a colonel called to the front of his regiment. His friends might joke him when he was off duty; but he was true as steel when he stood at the door of the lodge, and was examining anybody who wished to pass upstairs. If anybody who knew my rooms, and had visited them twenty times, ventured to pass his lodge and to pull my bell, without having undergone a preliminary inspection, the *concierge* would follow him up the stairs, and summon him to explain himself. Very amiable visitors laughed only; but the quick-tempered were not complimentary in their answers. An Italian visitor said to me one evening, "Do you know, that if I had not entertained the very highest respect for you, I should have boxed the ears of your *concierge!*" I am sure that if he had completely indulged his inclination, I should not have been mortally offended. I heard afterwards that my cook and the *concierge* had put the Italian

gentleman in his proper place. They had agreed that he was not worth much. Said the cook, "I opened the door to him, and he asked whether Monsieur was at home, without saying 'Good day' to me."

I was walking past the porter's lodge one afternoon, in great haste, when the *concierge* dashed out and called after me. He was in an excited state, and when excited he was in the habit of twitching his features into the most painful contortions; whereupon the following dialogue invariably passed between him and his wife—a portly lady, who might have carried him about in her reticule:—

"Don't make grimaces," the lady observed, with authority.

Her lord looked at her with scorn, tempered by the number of *coups* he had taken in the course of the morning. He would resume his conversation, completely turning his back upon his wife. She would fold her arms, and gradually shift her position to one where she could catch the expressions of her husband's face. Again, in a more authoritative tone—

"Don't make grimaces, I tell you, Monsieur."

Monsieur, without looking for an instant at his wife, would answer, "Is that any business of yours, Madame?" And as he replied, he would back towards her, and so force her into the lodge, continuing his conversation the while.

This scene was punctually enacted, when I was stopped on my way out to listen to a complaint.

The *concierge* removed his brown cap, smiled submissively—the rascal! and, in his sweetest voice, said—

"Monsieur will pardon me, but I have a little observation to make to him."

"Speak," said I, impatiently.

"It was past twelve o'clock when Monsieur's guest left last night. I am a light sleeper——"

"Well!" I interrupted sharply, having added ill-temper to my impatience.

"I only wish to make a little observation to Monsieur. If his guests would go a little

earlier—that's all. The bell rings close to my ears when I am in bed. The nights are beginning to be cold."

"Do I understand," I answered icily, "that you wish me to get up in my *salon* and say, 'Ladies and gentlemen, it is past eleven o'clock, and my *concierge* begs that you will go, for he is a light sleeper?'"

"Hold your tongue!" Madame exclaimed, escaping once more from the lodge. But her husband, without noticing, backed once more towards her, and drove her out of sight.

"Monsieur," he said, "will excuse my little observation."

The *concierge* took his revenge. I received daily complaints. The second-floor had been disturbed by our piano, the boys had stamped up the stairs, the maid had laughed in the face of the *concierge's* wife. Madame Buisson, the oyster woman or *écaillère* (of the powerful thumbs) recruited on the side of the *concierge*. It went up and down the street, that our laundress had called four times in one day for her bill. I must do the *belle écaillère* the

justice of at once allowing that she showed herself a mistress of scandal, in her conduct of this damaging fact. There could not be the least doubt about it—four times had the laundress called for her bill in one day. Hadn't we twenty francs among us? of what were we made? this poor woman wanted her money! We should take a cheaper lodging. The *concierge* called the *écaillère* to witness that he never had a high opinion of us. So much was established to our detriment. Clemence, the cook, affected despair, and vowed vengeance against the bad tongues that had maligned us, but the case as it stood damaged us only. This mild mischief did not satisfy the *écaillère*—she must have it artistically complete. When she condescended to wield a sword, she would have the world know it was a two-edged one. So she turned upon the laundress. The laundress was in a hurry for her money, because her lover had broken off all relations with her that morning; and she was determined to solace herself abundantly at the wine-shop. With this finishing

touch given to the story, it pleased all the street. I believe our servant, in the innocence of her heart, explained that the laundress called twice before the family was stirring; once when breakfast was in progress; and once when everybody was out; and that she had her money in the afternoon. But the explanation threw the *écaillère* into fits of laughter; she shook her head, and would not have her ingenious scandal destroyed.

If I fared badly, the *entresol* and the second-floor fared worse. Stung to the quick one morning with the hourly spying of the *concierge*, the *entresol* rushed out, took other rooms, and was in his new quarters before nightfall; while the second-floor—they were Poles, and, I grant, mysterious ones to boot—were, according to the *concierge*, "turned out" by him, because Monsieur returned home late at night. It will be easily imagined that the Poles did not escape the talk of the street. The *concierge* told the *écaillère*, who told the woman at the boot-stall in the Madeleine Market, who told our cook, that the

Polish lady in the second floor sat in her room, crying, all day long. The street knew that the Pole bought an umbrella; that he gave twenty francs for it, and that before it had been in the possession of his family twenty-four hours, his wife left it in an omnibus. I think the *concierge* must have celebrated the Pole's misfortune with an extra *coup*.

We followed the example of the *entresol*. If that *concierge* was not a *mouchard*, he had missed his vocation. His nose was in every bag of roasted chestnuts that entered the house. In vain I cried, "*Cordon, s'il vous plaît,*" in a winning voice, as though I were calling a bird to its sugar: I must be surveyed before I could pass into the street. When I returned home and pulled the bell, a brown wrinkled face, with no more shape nor complexion than a dried Normandy pippin, crowned with a cotton night-cap, was thrust out of a little window by the door, and I underwent another searching examination before the string was pulled. I have had experiences of many *concierges;* but my model

of the toping, gossiping, quarrelsome, pretentious, and disconcerted *concierge*, who combines under that snuff-brown cap of his all the vices of his class, is he who, I have since been told, has a *tendresse* for the *écaillère!*

My new *concierge*,—I watched him narrowly before I commited myself to a bargain for the rooms,—was a homely working man; quiet, and always occupied with *his own* business. In the morning he envelopes himself in a blue apron, that reaches from his chin to his toes; blacks boots, runs errands, delivers letters, and is, in short, ready for any duty, and to put a bright face on it. I have met a few like him;—one or two in students' hotels near the Pantheon: one in the Rue d'Angoulême St. Honoré (where, people conceive that they are bound to give themselves airs) and two or three in bourgeois' houses of unpretending aspect. But the *concierge* is a spy and a nuisance, whether amiable or angry, frank or prying; and he is full of scandal. He is the *bête noir* of the Parisians. They riddle him

with small shot; he provides thousands of pleasantries for the journals; there is a sneer all over the house when he raps at the doors of the various apartments on the morning of a new year's day, and, with his good wishes, leaves his present of a few oranges. This is his way of announcing that he expects a solid pecuniary new year's gift; and the gifts are many, for Fear bestows them. It has long been agreed on all hands, that it is prudent to be on excellent terms with the man who guards the gate of your house, who receives your letters, and who knows many of your secrets. He is laughed at, but he remains strong. His tyranny is felt every hour in the day, but Paris must be rebuilt before it can be shaken off. He can be punished if he betrays his trust; a lodger can compel the landlord to dismiss him, if he misbehaves himself; but while he is merely a reckless gossip, a malicious brewer of mischief, or an eccentric who is crushed by an overweening estimate of the importance of

his duties, he must be tolerated, and not only be tolerated, he must be petted.

A Parisian's house is not his castle—it is that of his *concierge!*

CHAPTER IV.

OUR COOK, CLEMENCE.

IT was impossible to find fault with Clemence. She was at once so humble, amiable, and ingenious. She wheedled the sword out of the enemy's grasp. She licked the hand just raised to pay her wages. Her sympathies were acute. She held in the utmost horror all the tricks of Paris tradesmen, and she had a profound contempt for the race of Paris cooks. She was a bright exception. Her life had been passed in the service of great families; so that she could not have the smallest idea of anything that was not correct. Her adventures, as she described them,

were not without interest, as audacious essays on the credulity of foreigners. The *aplomb* of Clemence was superb. She had a fine faculty for flattery. This soothing salve was spread over everybody. She had experience enough to last three lifetimes, and to crowd each; yet had it never been her good fortune to come across a family half so agreeable, or one-tenth part so distinguished, as ours. Our *bébé* was the most intelligent child she had ever approached; and she positively and repeatedly asserted her determination never to believe that he was only four years old. There must be some mistake. Clemence clasped her hands, stared at Monsieur Bébé, and exclaimed, "Four years! there must be some error!" Then our parrot was the pearl of parrots, and although Clemence had a white rag round her forefinger many days on his account, Monsieur Coco was pronounced "as sweet as an angel." Every body was handsome, amiable, and clever, and singularly unlike every other English family. This was held to be very great praise indeed.

Having, on her arrival, powdered us with compliments, Mademoiselle Clemence, our cook, considered that the time had come for setting forth her own perfections, and impressing upon all of us, down to that wonderful Monsieur Bébé, the tremendous stroke of luck we had made in obtaining her services. We were requested to consider, just for a moment, that, had we come only two days later, Clemence would have been snapped up by another family. We had escaped perdition by just forty-eight hours. However, we might now enjoy the singular good fortune that had befallen us; and thank Heaven we had secured Mademoiselle Clemence to be our cook. By this one piece of good fortune we had freed ourselves from a world of trouble; we had a cook who knew every thing and every body. We should have every thing cheap; why, the woman who brought the butter to the market twice in every week, had known her for twenty years. The butter-woman's husband worked in the commune where Mademoiselle Clemence's brother was *garde champêtre;* a fact

from which this lady endeavoured to convince us by rapid argument, which was conclusive to her mind, that we should have excellent butter and eggs for a mere nothing. And this accidental reference to her brother the *garde champêtre* naturally reminded Clemence of her own personal influence; which, she would have us know, was great with the highest personage in the Empire. She had talked with the Emperor—and had found him very agreeable. We humble folk expressed our astonishment, and, stimulated by the round eyes of Monsieur Bébé (who was again turned over, like a bundle, and pronounced ten years old at the very least), Mademoiselle Clemence, cook, continued:

"Yes: I lived in a very great family, where one of the Emperor's favourite generals visited. I told him my father had served the great Emperor, and that he had no pension. The General said he would speak to Napoleon the Third. So, one day he came, told me to dress in my best, and then I was taken to the Tuileries. The Emperor was

charming. He begged me to sit down; and when he had talked to me a little time, and promised me a pension for my father, he begged me to go and see him again."

The satisfaction manifested at this account of our cook's interview with the chief of the State, brought out the dominant peculiarity of Mademoiselle Clemence. She had a fine collection of stories, all of which tended to her own advantage. She had been the object of marked attention on the part of many of the great personages of her time; indeed, she had never lived with a family that was not remarkable in some way, and from which she had not received a studied and extraordinary compliment. She had lived with an English family who had been melted to tears when they were compelled to part with her. The name of the late Duke of Orleans was mentioned in her presence. This accident called an anecdote to her mind.

"I have spoken to the Duke," she said. "I was in the service of a peer of France at the time. One day a gentleman called. He

was struck with my height." Clemence was at least six feet high, and was proud of her inches. "'You are very tall,' the gentleman said; 'are you a Parisian?' I answered that I was not, but didn't tell him where I came from. When the gentleman had gone, my master came to me, and asked me whether I knew I had been talking to the eldest son of the King. I happened to put my hand in my apron pocket a few minutes afterwards, and felt that there was a piece of money in it. The Duke had contrived to slip a louis there unawares."

Poor Mademoiselle Clemence believed, in her innocence, that she was dazzling a few benighted English folk. She was making herself an authority, a heroine. She had travelled also. She had been to England with a rich Scotch family, fourteen in number—but then the Scotch, she had heard, never had less than twelve. "I have adventures always," she exclaimed gaily, "wherever I go. I have talked to the Queen of England." Perhaps a slight movement of incredulity on our part

stimulated her inventive faculties, for she hastened to explain her assertion. "My master in England was a high Court official. One day he and his wife were at St. James's Palace, when the Queen said, 'I have never seen a tall Frenchwoman.' My mistress replied that she had a French cook who was exceedingly tall. 'Indeed,' said the Queen, 'I should very much like to see her.' My mistress accordingly took me to the Palace, and I was introduced to the Queen. Her Majesty said that she was very glad to see me; asked me questions about my *pays;* and, when I was leaving, told me that whenever I came to England again, I was to be sure and let her know, and not to fail to call upon her. But that is not all. A few days afterwards a large parcel arrived from the Palace. I naturally thought it was for my mistress; but, on examining the direction, I saw it was for 'Mademoiselle Clemence, Cook.' I opened it, and found a handsome present from the Queen, with a very kind letter."

Mademoiselle Clemence repeated again and

again that the Queen of England was very *gracieuse;* and that, most certainly, if she visited London again, she should call. Mademoiselle was a very tall and horribly gaunt woman, whose sacrifices to the graces were as rare as they were superficial. She was an ill-preserved five-and-forty. Yet was she a great stickler for respect; and a formidable critic when the appearance of others was under discussion. Her airs of authority on all subjects, and the care she took to impress upon the people she served that she could not brook a word of censure, since she was never in the wrong—prevailed with the timid. She continued to convey to them a feeling that it would be the height of arrogance on their part to dismiss her for incompetency; she, who was so devoted to her employers; she, who took the part of the family against the *concierge;* she, who knew every body in the neighbourhood—and had been cook to dozens of English and other families in these very apartments. No: cooks as a body might be dismissible, but she was not.

Having taken her family by storm, Mademoiselle Clemence ruled with a rod of iron. She appeared smiling and confident, every morning, to take our orders. With a refinement of cruelty, she called her own amendments to any suggestions, "Madame's commands." She went to market: bought what she pleased, at her own price. She alone held relations with the butcher. Every dish that was suggested to her was within her competence. No sauce came amiss to her. When a little *entrée* that required the nicest handling, and which the *gourmet* would not order at any restaurant, was hinted at, she laughed at it. It was a trifle to her. It was the easiest thing in the world. Any cook could manage a *suprême*. "We should have it"—but we never saw it. It had struck Mademoiselle Clemence, just an hour before dinner, that we should like a nice wholesome dish of stewed veal for the children, much better. To begin with, Monsieur Bébé was so fond of it; and he had such coaxing, winning ways, it was a real delight to please him.

Clemence had taken the entire family into her heart of hearts. She had a lively regard for our health, and had always considered (although, of course, it was for Madame to decide) that a plain diet was the most wholesome. A good soup; a nice *gigot*, or some cutlets, say with tomato sauce; and some good fruit—what could be better for health? Old men wanted spiced dishes, and couldn't eat a sole unless it was *au gratin* or *à la Normandie*. Poor fellows, their digestion was so impaired, their appetite was so enfeebled, a plain fried sole was not enough to tempt them; they must have strong wine also, to warm their poor stomachs, before they could eat at all. But young people liked simple dishes, because their digestion was good; and the people who were the simplest eaters had the longest lives. The Berrings, whom Clemence had accompanied to London, who were immensely rich people, were as remarkable for the simplicity of their table as they were for their extraordinary wealth. They always had plain fish, plain meat, and

good fruit. When they had company, they went, of course, to Chevet; and the place was inundated with cooks and *patissiers*. They received only ambassadors and court people. They had been known to pay two francs each for peaches. What could a few hundred francs, more or less, be to them? Even on these occasions Mr. and Madame Berrings hardly touched any thing. They dined with the children beforehand! And such children. What a colour they had! They often reminded Clemence of ours, except that they hadn't one who could be compared for a single instant with Monsieur Bébé. To be sure, it was not every day such a child could be seen.

Clemence could cook a fowl over her little charcoal fire. She could arrange a *pot-au-feu*, she could stew veal with mushrooms, and she could accomplish a rough idea of beef *à la mode* —beef *à la mode* being, I may observe, as unlike that strange mixture of meat and vegetables for which so many British taverns are "celebrated," as Crécy is unlike Bisque. Clemence,

however, could not make a fair Julienne soup. I suggested that her opaque fluid, charged with potatoes, was not my idea of the soup called Julienne. Clemence smiled. She was too powerful to rebuke me. It would be a strange thing—indeed, it would be unaccountable—if she didn't know how to make Julienne soup. The Berrings were so delighted with it, that she had the very greatest difficulty in persuading them to have any other soup. The General who introduced her to the Emperor, said he enjoyed it more than any dish he had touched since his return from the Crimea; and he had dined at the Tuileries day after day.

In an evil moment the family which Clemence deigned to serve, while waiting for another opportunity of calling on the Queen of England, and of speaking to the Emperor on the advisability of making her father a Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, discovered a liking for tomatos. From that moment they almost lived on them. They

appeared at table with every dish. Clemence enlarged upon their merits; only people of good taste cared for them; they were excellent for the health: she knew *we* should like them. The Berrings were never tired of eating them. It did her heart good to see Mr. Berrings devour them:—he was so *distingué*. He was a perfect English gentleman. The French laughed at his red hair: but she always maintained that it gave him a noble appearance.

Mademoiselle Clemence had one aversion, and one only; and that aversion was the *concierge*. She always avoided him when she could. He told her that Monsieur came home at past one o'clock last night. She answered that it was no business of his when Monsieur chose to come home. It was his duty to pull the string and hold his tongue. He was known throughout the neighbourhood, and was quite capable of saying all kinds of things about us. We might, however, be quite easy, for she would let the neighbourhood know how

he had behaved. He had a wicked tongue, and nobody knew it better than his wife—poor woman!

Mademoiselle Clemence, in short, was a very clever talker; but a very bad cook. Matters came to a crisis over an omelette. It was a bad omelette, the worst ever put between mortal teeth. We were stern; and Clemence had the sagacity to see that her reign was at an end. She had worn out the Berrings; she felt that she could not persuade us that the General who had introduced her to the Emperor, préferred broken, greasy, and shapeless omelettes. She had speculated with all her stories, and had failed. But she had the neighbourhood still to her back. She had a standing of twenty years in her *quartier!* When, at last, it was made known that we were going to leave the neighbourhood, Mademoiselle Clemence was equal to the occasion. She contained herself. She still brought an apple or a cake to that wonder of wonders, Monsieur Bébé. He was still an angel and a jewel. Mademoiselle Clemence

was affable enough to talk about the generosity of the English, and of the roomful of valuables former families, whom she had served, had left her. Monsieur's luncheon was still to her an object of paramount importance. Her only anxiety was to know that we were not going to engage another cook in our new quarters.

Mademoiselle Clemence held out bravely to the last moment; her gratitude (she had been preposterously overpaid) being a lively sense of favours to come.

It chanced that some valuables were left behind in the old lodgings. Some unfortunate creatures were sent to fetch them. Mademoiselle Clemence was seated in the box of the *concierge*, in close conversation with him. In company with the *concierge*, she burst forth. The torrent of her abuse was copious, for she was not satisfied with the gratification she had received—in addition to her wages.

Mademoiselle Clemence is now telling her stories of her introduction to two crowned

heads, to another English family—in the very rooms of the late English family which she execrates. If they be fond of amusing inventions and bad dinners, she will satisfy them. Clemence is a representative woman. There are many copies of her in the English quarter of Paris. She knows all the tradespeople of her quarter well, and she leads her families to their shops. I don't quarrel with her, because she has her *remise* on every spoonful of jam the children eat; but because she and her class flourish by talking many of my countrymen and countrywomen into the belief that they are—French cooks!

CHAPTER V.

OUR MELANCHOLY BAKER.

I WAS leaving my room in the Rue de Castellane early one morning, when I was met at my door by the baker, who had just stood two loaves, each about the length of a musket, against the wall. I was struck by the man's mournful and sick appearance. He was as thin as a living human being well could be. There was a most touching expression of pain and weariness in his sunken eyes; and he went heavily—very heavily for so spare a man—down the stairs. I heard that he had a little sharp cough. His miserable figure interested me, and led

me to consider and to inquire into the condition of the working bakers of Paris. Often on my way home at night I had been startled by the most painful screams and groans, that appeared to travel to my ears from the earth under my feet; and on looking through a little trap under a baker's shop-window, I had found that the discordant noise proceeded from two or three half-nude men, who were kneading vast troughs of dough in a steamy cellar. I have watched these poor labourers, doomed to toil through winter and through summer nights, and to sleep through the sunlight—with profound pity. Not only are they exposed to all kinds of unhealthy influences, baked for hours in a cellar, and thrust out on chilly mornings to go home to their garrets; but they are doomed to live apart from all other classes of working men. Any reader who may have been accustomed, while in Paris, to take early walks, may have seen the well-known figure of the journeyman baker ambling sadly home after his night's

work, in his grey cotton clothes, and with the new-baked loaf, which is his daily perquisite, under his arm. He has just left the hot mouth of the oven, and the cold morning breeze strikes to the marrow of his bones. He is hurrying, sore oppressed, to his bed, through crowds of labourers, who, fresh after a good night's sleep, are commencing their day's work.

I am at a loss to discover why French dramatic writers have been in the habit of selecting the baker as their type of the jolly buffoon; for I am certain that a more mournful figure than that of him who passes his weary nights making the daily bread of the Parisians, does not exist within the fortifications. His trade forces him to be unsociable, for he is asleep when the rest of the world is awake. He can just say "Good morning" and "Good night" to his neighbours, and he bears the sombre marks of his forced isolation in his doleful countenance.

There are in existence some very curious

and remarkable historical treatises on the corporations and trade customs of the bakers of Paris, tracing their industry from the time when all citizens were compelled to bake their bread in the public ovens, which were the properties of great lords, or of religious establishments. These public ovens were sources of great profit, since every citizen was compelled to bake his bread in them, paying to the proprietor a fixed price. It was in the beginning of the fourteenth century that the Parisians obtained permission from the sovereign to have private ovens in their own houses. The owners of the public ovens, however, did not give up their privileges without a struggle; as late as the beginning of the fifteenth century, in some parts of Paris, people who had private ovens were compelled to pay an indemnity to the reverend owners of the public ovens. This indemnity was called the Little Oven Tax—a tax that was not completely abolished before 1675. The history of the quarrels between the *grand panetier* of

the court, who received the taxes due from the bakers to the king, and the provost of Paris; and again between the town bakers, the bakers of the suburbs, and the country bakers, who had each their separate and peculiar privileges, may be found in the pages of Levasseur and Boland. Therein also are lists of the vexatious fines and taxes which the journeyman baker was compelled to pay to the authorities. His reception as a master baker was conducted with a quaint ceremony. On the day appointed for his initiation, he presented himself at the door of the meeting-room, holding a new glazed earthenware pot, which was filled with cakes and nuts, saying, "Master, I have served my four years. Behold! here is my vessel full of nuts." Then the master of the craft asked the clerk in attendance if this were true. When the clerk replied in the affirmative, the master returned the vessel full of nuts and cakes to the candidate, who forthwith shattered it against the wall. From that moment he was a master baker; and

his reception was celebrated with a banquet. This ceremony remained in force from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth. Then a tree, garnished with beans or oranges, was presented, instead of the earthenware vessel; and lastly, the presentation of a *louis d'or* sufficed.

The trade of baker must have been, in the olden time, one to try the temper of the most patient of men. At one period, a Paris baker could light his oven only on 290 days of the year. He could not bake on Sundays; and we are told that it was amusing to watch the bakers standing in their doorways on Monday mornings, with their ears stretched, to catch the first sound of the matin bell, when they might light their ovens. Then there was the great trial of the Queen's bread, in the making of which yeast was used, and in the course of which the doctors, called in to give their opinion as to the effect of bread made with yeast on health, fell out, to the great delight of the author of the *Malade Imaginaire.*

If, however, in all these times of trouble and vexatious regulations, the poor journeyman baker was seldom at peace, at least he had the comfort of looking forward to the time when he might marry his master's daughter, and set up a shop for himself. But the poor journeyman bakers of to-day, who flit fretfully about in the twilight and in the dawn, have no such hope left. Capital, which they can never have an opportunity of amassing, is necessary to open a baker's shop, even now when the monopoly has been destroyed. Here he will remain where I see him now, on this bleak winter night, in this cellar under the shop, with the red-hot mouth of the oven almost singeing his body; making and baking the bread of his fellow man to the end of his short life. Little unbroken rest has he, even by day; for he must watch once or twice in the daytime, the preparation for the night's batch of bread. The labour of kneading it is most unhealthy to him, driving the particles of flour into his lungs, and it cannot be ad-

vantageous to the bread. Still, the Paris journeyman baker vehemently opposes the introduction of kneading machinery, in the fear that it will leave him to starve; and up to this moment he has been able to restrict the use of bread-making machinery within very narrow limits. Although his wages are low, and his hope of advancement is almost *nil*, he clings to the old system, albeit it must bring him to an early grave. The labour of a working baker is so hard, that apprentices to it are seldom entered younger than eighteen years of age. The apprenticeship lasts during a year or eighteen months; and the premium paid to the master baker fluctuates between five and six pounds. At the expiration of this short apprenticeship, he becomes a brigadier. It is his duty to heat the oven, to put the bread in it, and remove it, and generally to exercise the functions of a foreman. His wages are usually a trifle under four shillings per diem. In the bakery with him is that important workman called the First Help. It is he

who kneads the bread, sending forth, as from the bowels of the earth, the groans and piercing cries that affright late-returning merry-makers. He shapes the dough into loaves, with the assistance of the Second Help. The first help earns about three and sixpence per diem; and his assistant has between half a crown and three shillings per diem. A fourth workman generally completes the staff of an ordinary Parisian bakery. This last is the drudge. He chops the wood, fetches the water, counts the loaves, and, in short, does all the needful drudgery, for something under two shillings per diem. The poor bakers are, I may observe, paid for over-work—in this way. When they have to bake more than seven batches of bread, each batch containing seventy loaves, the workmen receive fivepence each for the eighth batch, and a penny each for the ninth. In addition to these money payments, each workman is allowed to take away two pounds of bread daily; and it is this two-pound loaf that we have so

often seen under his arm, as he trotted away through the morning cold, to his bed. He is allowed, moreover, to eat as much bread as he pleases during the night. There are indulgent masters, who give the poor fellows a sip of white wine before they start home in the morning; but these are, I fear, rare exceptions.

There is no trade so poor, no handicraft so lowly paid, that it will not yield something to the avarice of the usurer or the skilful knave. These poor journeymen bakers were, some years ago, in the hands of a set of rascals, who kept agencies for finding places for journeymen bakers out of work. They charged the poor fellows whom they placed as much sometimes as thirty francs. But this overcharge was not the worst part of their operation, for no sooner had the poor journeymen paid the agent's fee, than this same agent earwigged his master, and obtained his discharge; so that the poor fellow was obliged to return once again to the usurer, and to pay thirty francs for another place. This scandalous

grinding of the poor has ceased, however; and now the journeyman baker is protected against such rapacity; but still he is far from satisfied with the conditions under which he can obtain employment.

And no wonder. The Parisians will have new bread—the crisp *croissant* and the *brioche* light as any feather—to dip into their matutinal coffee, so he must labour through the night. He must stand for hours between the current of night air and the mouth of the oven. He is thirty years old before he becomes a perfect workman: at forty, his strength is exhausted, and he is good for nothing. His sun is a smoky oil-lamp; the home of his waking moments—a stifling cellar. The air is charged with particles of flour that produce ophthalmia. He is cramped with rheumatism, and shaken with a chronic cough. The doctors who have examined the question declare that it is impossible for a journeyman baker to pursue his vocation after he is fifty years of age. Melancholy, however, as the lot is of the Paris bread-maker, it is borne

with patient courage. The trade is never in want of hands, and it is regularly established, like trades of happier promise, with its institutions, its *fêtes*, its houses of call, and its privileges. In the great freemasonry of labour which extends over France, the journeymen bakers are the children of Master Jacques; and under his protecting influence they make their tour of France. It is said that some seven or eight hundred young workmen annually start on this tour, full of hope, and with faith in their patron saint, St. Honoré. Albeit, the French bakers have proved somewhat fickle towards their saints. In the first instance they placed themselves under the protection of St. Pierre aux Lieus, because his *fête* was in the harvest time. But they abandoned St. Peter for St. Lazarus in the Middle Ages, because the latter had the power of curing leprosy; and it was then the general belief that contact with the fire predisposed men to this scourge. Four centuries and a half having elapsed since the bakers forsook the protection of St. Lazarus, it is

not strange that the reasons for their desertion have been lost. It is more than probable that, having discovered contact with fire did not produce leprosy, they felt themselves at perfect liberty to choose another saint from the calendar. It is but justice to the bakers to add, that at least they have been faithful to their present saint during nearly four centuries; and that on the 16th of May, in every year, they celebrate his feast. On this happy May-day the mournful bread-makers come forth from their bakeries betimes; attire themselves in their best; deck themselves out in the ribbons that mark their rank in their craft; and repair to the residence of the Mother. It should be understood by the reader, that the Mother is the landlady of the house of entertainment where the various crafts of French working men meet. The Mother is a personage of great distinction, to whom apprentices and journeymen pay the utmost respect. On the morning of St. Honoré, when all the working bakers have assembled, they arrange themselves in procession, and,

preceded by a band and a colossal cake, borne by two or three of their companions, proceed through the streets, to hear mass at the church of St. Roch. The religious service at an end, they march back to the house of the Mother, where they hold a banquet, only the members of their craft being present, with the addition of the Mother, who is the honoured guest. Plentiful invitations have been sent out to craftsmen of other trades for a ball in the evening. The printed invitations are ornamented with symbols of the craft, and have "Honour and Glory to Labour" for their motto. The bakers' ball is said to be remarkable among Paris working men's balls for the elegance of the wives and daughters who attend it; and for the polite manners that are shown at it. The poor pale fathers and brothers forget the fetid bakery and the blazing oven for the moment, and do their best to be gay. The morrow will find them, probably, more sombre than ever.

The bread-making of Paris gives work to nearly three thousand individuals. In the

latest compiled statistics of Paris industry, it is stated that ninety per cent. of the journeymen bakers could read and write, and that sixty per cent. of them had their own furniture. These figures prove that the men are at once thoughtful and prudent. They have, indeed, few opportunities for dissipation, since Paris sleeps through their waking hours. Left much to themselves, the quiet reading of a paper over a pipe, is the amusement to which they naturally have recourse.

There is a legend concerning three gay bakers, which is described by Pierre Vinçard. These three rollicking children of the dough trough were named respectively Turlupin, Gautier-Garguille, and Gros-Guillaume. They were all three journeymen bakers, and worked together in the Quartier St. Laurent. They were bound together by a close and sincere friendship. The natural humour that was in them bubbled over. Bread-making was too dull and tedious an employment for them, so they took to the stage. It is one thing to resolve to take to the stage, and another to

find the stage. The three jolly bakers were reduced to the necessity of building their own platform. They hired an old tennis court, and with their own hands raised a little theatre in it; they painted their own decorations; in short, they did every thing, being unable to pay for help. On this rough stage they played all kinds of grotesque scenes, which they called *Turlupinades*—the hour of performance being from one till two o'clock in the afternoon, and the price of admission being about three halfpence. Turlupin played the low comedy valets; Gros-Guillaume was the heavy moralist; and Gautier-Garguille was the pedant and family man. Their success was so great that it gave umbrage to the pretentious actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, who complained to the Cardinal de Richelieu that these vagabonds were injurious competitors; whereupon the Cardinal ordered the three jolly bakers to play one of their wild farces in his presence. The trio were so irresistibly comic, that they extorted many laughs even from his grave Eminence, who, in gratitude, ordered that they should

be admitted to play on the stage of the Hôtel de Bourgogne; and in this way their denunciators were confounded. The end of the jolly trio, however, was a very sad one. In an evil moment, and carried away by the fun of the scene, Gros-Guillaume took it into his unlucky head to mimic some well-known peculiarities of a great magistrate, who was present among the audience. The great man took this in evil part, and had the poor actor cast into prison, where he died. Appalled at the fate of Gros-Guillaume, his two companions took to flight. From their hiding-place they heard of his death. The news was too heavy for their gentle hearts, so they laid themselves down, and within a week were with poor Gros-Guillaume—beyond the reach of any earthly magistrate's vengeance. They were all three buried together in the church of St. Saviour, then the ordinary place of interment for actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne.

The three jolly bakers of the seventeeth century were put to rest, we venture to say,

with much less pomp and ceremony than may be seen in these days, when a baker—a child of Master Jacques—is carried to his long home. The body of the dead journeyman baker is laid upon an open car; the car is surrounded by journeymen bakers, children of Master Jacques, who, decently attired and decorated with red, green, and white ribbons, are about to attend their lost companion to his grave. When the car moves forward, they march in step on either side of it, marking time with the long canes they carry in their hands, as symbols of their rank. Arrived at the grave in the cemetery, they range themselves in a circle round the coffin; then two journeymen approach from opposite sides of the coffin, and lean towards each other over it. They make certain waves and signs with their canes, looking fixedly and mournfully at one another the while; then they raise a plaintive cry, beat their breasts with their left hands, and whisper in each other's ear, over the coffin. All this is repeated three or four times; then the body is lowered into the grave.

A journeyman approaches, and a broad black cloth is thrown over him and the grave. A groan seems to rise out of the earth—a by-stander need not be very acute to make up his mind that the said groan proceeds from the covered journeyman. It is answered by a wail of lamentation from the assembled men of the craft; and then the earth rattles over the dead man's breast; and he who has passed his weary life, ill-paid and over-worked, making the bread of his fellow men, is left to his long sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

OUR ARTIST IN MEAT.

IT was on a certain Easter Sunday that I discovered the artistic genius of our butcher. I was going for a walk, to see the Parisians in their new clothes, carrying their Easter offerings about, and showing themselves on the Boulevards and in the Champs Elysées, when my attention was arrested at our gateway by a select group of admirers, to whom our butcher, usually a taciturn man, was addressing himself with animation. The group consisted of neighbouring cooks and housemaids, of the grocer's boy opposite, of the poultry merchant, the black wood and charcoal mer-

chant, and a hairdresser in the bud, who wore a comb in his Brutus with open pride. The picture upon which the admiring group were gazing was at least a curious one. The entire carcase of a fine calf was spread in the centre of the shop-front. Its four legs were thrust at right angles, and were the points to which the four corners of a flat even surface of white fat were fixed. Upon this surface our butcher had, with consummate art, carved a most intricate, but withal graceful, design. At the borders, the fat was so finely pierced into patterns that, at a distance, it looked like lace; while the centre of the square was filled with a well-modelled clump of flowers. Carcases of sheep were arranged in artistic order round this central masterpiece; the back of each sheep being tattooed with flowing lines that would have roused the jealousy of the highest New Zealand chief. Our butcher, with his arms folded, and his ruddy face shining in the bright spring sun, stood with the noble *pose* of a conqueror waiting for his laurels. He said, with the

view of impressing the little public about him with a due sense of the magnitude of his labours, "We were up at two o'clock this morning, every one of us." Even our *triste* baker paused as he entered the house, and smiled to see how gay an appearance our butcher's shop had put on. The entrance to the shop was a triumphal arch of butcher's meat. Two noble sides of beef were supporting pillars to *gigots* so shapely and solid, that for a moment I had a mind to write to the renowned British butcher, Mr. Slater, in London, begging him to look to his legs.

During two or three days, our butcher, having a corner shop for the display of his art-workmanship in fat, and the delicacy of his touch on the backs of sheep, was a considerable personage in our neighbourhood. He appeared to be very popular, to boot. I have not the least hesitation in stating, that the poultry merchant and the hairdresser's apprentice and the journeyman baker have quite forgiven the descendants of Caboche, the slaughterman, their part in the detestable

massacres of the Duke of Burgundy and the Count D'Armagnac. Yes: the part played by the butchers in the Paris doings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was a savage and detestable part. Was it not the butchers, moreover, who carried a canopy over the head of Henry the Sixth of England when he entered Paris as King of France, in 1431? They were a rich corporation, with power to overbear every other trade, and they lorded it right heartily. When the doleful bell of St. Germain l'Auxerrois tolled on that fatal night for the Huguenots, the butchers were alert with their whetted steel. They did their part of the massacre. What said butcher Pizon, renowned for his activity in the bloodshed? When Charles the Ninth asked him whether there were any living Huguenots remaining in Paris, Butcher Pizon answered his sovereign to his royal heart's content:—

"Sire," said the loyal butcher, "yesterday I threw one hundred and twenty of them into the river, and I've as many more for to-night."

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The answer of the butcher tickled Charles mightily. According to Saintfoix, people thought his Majesty would never have finished laughing.

The children of ferocious Pizon and Caboche have power no longer to do mischief, nor have they the disposition. In the old time they had certain virtues, and these they are reputed to possess still. The wholesale butchers are most honourable and chivalrous in their dealings with each other. It is related of them, that at the cattle-market any master butcher will lend his neighbour twenty or forty pounds, without acknowledgement or receipt; and that, indeed, it is not unusual for a borrower to be ignorant of the name of his lender. So that, on market mornings, a master butcher is often heard shouting, "Last market I borrowed forty pounds of somebody. Who was it?" The master butchers of Paris may be divided into three classes. In the first place, there are what are called the carcase butchers, who buy cattle alive, slaughter it, and sell the carcases

wholesale. There were not more than sixty of these master butchers in Paris in the year 1851. Then there are the "regular" butchers, who slaughter their own meat; and, lastly, the strictly retail butchers, who buy the carcase, and sell the chop. The master butchers of Paris, before their trade was made free, were not more than five hundred. strong. Their records prove that they were exceedingly charitable among followers of their own trade. These five hundred master butchers were, in 1851, supporting one hundred and twenty-two of their unfortunate fellow tradesmen. It was in 1848 that they voluntarily established a benefit society for their workmen, by levying a contribution of one sou on every bullock sold, and one centime on every sheep. This light charitable tax produced about 400*l.* per annum, and enabled the master butchers to give broken-down workmen a franc a day.

The butcher's trade is a melancholy and repulsive one at the best. The boy who is apprenticed to a Paris butcher has generally

two years to serve. He is at once sent to the slaughter-house; after six months he is promoted to the duty of killing; and lastly, he reaches the dignity of an *étalier*, who prepares the meat for display in the shop. The head men at the slaughter-house are paid by the number of animals that pass through their hands. They receive about 1*s.* 6*d.* for every ox; 1*s.* 2*d.* for every calf; and 1½*d.* for every sheep. The most skilful workmen in the slaughter-houses appear to gain occasionally as much as 8*s.* a day; but these fortunate individuals are rare, and in order to earn such wages, they must slave incessantly. They go to work, winter and summer, at two o'clock in the morning, and are drenched with water by the hour together. There are numbers of irregularly employed men about the slaughter-houses, who help the head slaughterman, and can earn, when they are employed, 2*s.* a day. These helps are a rude and dissipated set, who perform all the more repulsive parts of slaughter-house duties. They have been reduced by stern

necessity to their brutalizing employment. They are quite apart from, and utterly unlike in every respect, the men employed in the butchers' shops of Paris. The salesmen in these shops have much taste and some culture. Our butcher's salesman is the gossip of the neighbourhood. He has usurped the old barber's privileges of gossiping. He is carefully dressed, and carries a snow-white *serviette*. The shop, of which he is the presiding spirit, where he jokes with the cooks who come every day to bargain for the meat, and who carry it off with them, is in no respect like an English butcher's shop. The meat lies upon marble slabs, and there is a certain elegance about every arrangement. Our butcher's salesman and help live with him on the most amicable terms. The salesman, in addition to his board and lodging, receives, probably, about 20*l*. per annum. An ordinary salesman, who is not boarded by his employer, will earn about 25*s*. a week.

If our neighbours cannot boast beef like that of old England, nor mutton like that

which is fed on the sweet-scented English moors and downs; at least to them belongs the merit of having, three hundred years ago, seen the advantages and the propriety of having healthy slaughter-houses, without the gates of the city. The authorities had to deal with obstinate men in the Paris butchers of those days. They rebelled against the orders of Parliament. They looked to their own convenience, and not to the health of their neighbours, nor to the wholesomeness of their meat. The struggle went on between the authorities and the butchers from one century to the next, the butchers always having the best of the struggle.

According to Mercier, the slaughter-houses were, towards the end of the last century, in the middle of the city; and the moaning of the dying animals could be heard by the passers-by, in the most frequented streets. Now and then, an ox, frantic from the clumsy blow of a slaughterman, would make his escape, and scatter terror through a neighbourhood.

Feydeau de Marville, when Lieutenant of

Police in 1740, made a great effort to drive the slaughter-houses out of the city; but the answer he obtained was, that the corporation of butchers were rich and powerful, and had great friends at Court. The year 1810 had opened before these powerful tradesmen were vanquished, and model slaughter-houses were established in the environs of Paris. There are now seven admirably organized slaughter-houses in the vicinity of the French capital. Neither sheep nor ox is ever seen in the streets. Every detail connected with the killing of animals, and the security of the consumer against insalubrious meat, is strictly regulated. The men who drive cattle from the markets to the slaughter-houses, are under inspectors, and are appointed by the prefecture of police. Directly after the animals arrive at the slaughter-house they are examined by a government expert, and they cannot be sold as meat until he has certified that they are in a healthy condition. Government inspectors also examine the meat exposed for sale in town; and that

which they condemn as unfit for human foot is sent to the Carnivora at the *Jardin des Plantes* to be consumed. The Paris slaughter-houses are surrounded with trees, not only to give them an agreeable aspect, but also to purify the air, which is charged with animal exhalations. The most stringent regulations enforce the cleanliness of every part of these establishments. No kind of animal matter is allowed to accumulate, on any pretext whatever. In short, it is not possible to conceive a precaution that has not been taken by the Paris authorities. The consequence is, that no Parisian is ever nauseated by seeing horrible loads of fresh hides or bones, or animals' heads passing through the streets. The *tripiers*, as well as the butchers, are strictly governed. And so about 251 million pounds of meat are prepared every year for the good citizens of Paris, with the least possible inconvenience or danger to them. This has been accomplished, no doubt, at the sacrifice of many of the ancient dignities of the master butchers.

The glorious days of the privileged Four Hundred are departed for ever. Time was when the master butchers were in the front of every public ceremony. They were the observed of all observers when kings entered the city, or when there were public rejoicings at the birth or baptism of princes. They were in the enjoyment of high consideration when the first Revolution burst upon Paris. The master butchers, being among the privileged classes, were wroth with the mob, who had dared to set up a democratic form of government. At the *fête* of the Federation only the working butchers presented themselves: the aristocrats, their masters, declining to exhibit any sympathy with the new order of things that had destroyed their ancient privileges. During the Revolution, even the old pagan procession of the Fat Ox destined for sacrifice, was discontinued. It had been the great show of Carnival time in Paris for many years. An eyewitness of the procession of 1739 describes how he saw an ox with a branch of red laurel over its head, and

covered with embroidered cloth, led through the streets by the butchers' men. Upon the back of the ox was seated a child, who was called the King of the Butchers. The young king wore a blue scarf, and carried in one hand a golden sceptre, and in the other, a naked sword. The butchers were dressed in red and white, and capped with turbans. This grotesque procession was preceded through the streets by a band of violins, fifes, and drums. When, in 1805, the butchers managed to have their ancient procession through the streets restored, they found their inventive faculties restricted by the severity of the police regulations. The number of butchers who might accompany the fat ox through the streets was limited, and the costume of the masqueraders was exactly described. The government of the great Napoleon ordered that a child dressed to resemble Cupid, or rather undressed to resemble Cupid—should be mounted on an ox weighing as nearly as possible thirteen hundred pounds. The ox was to be richly

caparisoned, his horns were to be gilded, and he was to be surrounded by twelve working butchers, who were to wear all the "attributes of their profession."

The procession of the Fat Ox has lasted down to the present time; but each year it has become more tawdry. It has fallen in public estimation; it is laughed at and scoffed at as out of date; but it is the only remnant left of the ancient street splendours of the butchers. It has, moreover, its commercial use to a few, and so it struggles on from year to year, paying grotesque calls at the Tuileries, and at the ministries of State. It delights the children, who anticipate a peep at the fat ox on Shrove Tuesday as keenly as they anticipate a large consumption of pancakes. These are sharp business times, and now the fat ox is merely the splendid advertisement of an enterprising master butcher. His name becomes a household word throughout all Paris. There is a butcher in the Rue St. Roch, who, since the year 1851, has been the owner of eight of the fat oxen that have

been paraded at the close of the Carnival. Last February, while his prize ox was being rolled along the Boulevards in a car of triumph, followed by a shivering bevy of nymphs in ballet-girl costume, grouped on an open chariot; and horsemen disguised as old women, monkeys, or dogs; he had suspended before his shop, a great curtain, upon which in letters of gold were enumerated the prize oxen of this proud butcher. The tawdry procession, preceded by a band and followed by a troop of grave dragoons, went under the windows of the Emperor's palace, and the grave face of the hero of Solferino looked down from a balcony upon the butcher's masquerade.

Our butcher is a grave, plain, homely man, who, it is most probable, looks down with ineffable contempt upon the ox with the gilded horns, and the tawdry ballet girls, who follow in his wake. The Paris butchers of the new school have broken completely with the ancient spirit of their proud trade, and our butcher is of the new school. I have en-

deavoured to show that he is something more than a plain butcher. Just as the coiffeur is an artist in hair, he is an artist in meat—a sculptor in fat! It is not because he despises a tawdry show dragged through the streets in the bleak month of February, and will not present himself before his sovereign, with the mask of a monkey upon his robust shoulders, that he is to be set down as a prosaic unimpressible slayer of sheep and oxen. He is rather to be taken as a tradesman who has educated himself out of spangles and tinsel, and has taken his rank among the more advanced butchers, who have laboured to destroy the grossness of the shambles, and to show a work of art on the hind-quarters of a sheep. I can see no reason why some of our butcher's designs for the decoration of veal and mutton should not be included in those interesting Exhibitions of Art applied to Industry, which are held from time to time under the Crystal Roof in the Champs Elysées; or why they should not figure in one of the series of Annual International Exhibitions which are to begin next

year at South Kensington. I only know that since Easter Sunday last, when I saw that masterpiece in veal, and those pretty sketches in mutton, which our Paris butcher displayed with pardonable pride, I have more than once wondered whether, when actively engaged in the consumption of one of his *gigots*, I were not ruthlessly putting my barbarian teeth through a masterpiece.

CHAPTER VII.

MONSIEUR BÉBÉ'S PURVEYOR OF "PLAISIRS."

THERE is a plaintive cry that rises from Paris streets about sundown, accompanied with the monotonous sound of a wooden rattle, that is delightful to the ear of French children, and has been a familiar sound, through life, to the oldest inhabitant of Paris. The street-seller of *plaisirs* or *oublies* as they were called long, long years ago, is generally an elderly woman of somewhat lively temperament, dressed with scrupulous neatness, her head covered with a cap, white as mountain snow. She must needs be amiable, and of a kindly habit of mind, for it is her business to please, and

attract children to that magic round green box, in which she holds those frail crisp cakes, curled in the shape of sugar-bags, which have delighted—well, how many generations shall we say?—of the vivacious, light-witted children of *Lutetia.* These *oublies* of sweet paste, cooked between hot irons, have come direct down, according to some authorities, transmitted to the Paris *bébés* of to-day, from the Obliophores, who used to cry their cakes, or obolios, about the streets of ancient Athens. Certain it is, however, that the rising generations of Parisians have been delighted with the toothsome *oublie* or *plaisir* from a very remote period. Time was, when the King of France had his Officer of the Mouth, whose duty it was to offer *oublies* to the royal guests. Centuries ago the street vendors of *oublies* (which were carried about hot, in a basket laid out with white linen) tempted their customers to gamble with dice for their dainties. Sometimes a very lucky gambler would win the basket and its entire load. Levasseur, in his history of the working classes, describes

how the students, when they had won a whole basket of *oublies*, were in the habit of hanging them outside their windows in triumph. But when the makers of *oublies* or *oublayers* were formed into a corporation under regular statutes, the use of dice was prohibited, and the *oublayers* gradually developed into a great corporation of pastrycooks, making infinite varieties of pastry. Considerable skill was demanded from the journeyman pastrycook, even in the thirteenth century; for then he was compelled, by the statutes of his corporation, to prove that he could make at least a thousand of the cakes called *heules* in a day. In the old laws which governed the Paris pastrycooks, there are many excellent ones, which punish them severely for using unwholesome materials. Many privileges were accorded to them, such as the exclusive right of selling pastry to the religious bodies, &c.; and time was, when vassals were compelled, on certain days of the year, to offer *oublies* to their feudal lords; so that the *Oublayer* occupied a somewhat important position. On

the fête-day of his craft—the day of St. Michael—he accordingly gave himself great airs, proceeding to church on horseback, in grotesque costume, accompanied by drums and music. At Pentecost again he was wont to cause his *oublies* to fall from the roof of the church at one part of the service, and to let birds loose, with *oublies* on their wings, at another part of it. These early pastrycooks appear to have given much trouble to the authorities of the city, from time to time. At one moment street vendors of their cakes tempted poor little children to steal, in order to buy them. At another time it was discovered that cheap pies filled with bad meat were being sold at low prices, and were strongly flavoured with onions in order to disguise the odour of the meat. All these irregularities were met with new and more stringent apprenticeship laws, and other regulations. In 1566, it was ordered that every pastrycook must serve an apprenticeship of five years; and that before he could be received into the craft, he must show his skill

by making six large pies, and the usual varieties of *oublies* and other small pastry.

By the side of these *oublayers*, or pastrycooks, grew the no less ancient and remarkble gingerbread makers, who proudly trace the origin of their delicacy to the ancient Greeks, who loved that famous gingerbread of Rhodes, which was flavoured with honey. The pastrycooks and the gingerbread makers crossed each other's path angrily more than once. The pastrycooks had the privilege, on *fête* days, of keeping their open ovens at the church doors, that they might sell hot cakes to the faithful. Their activities and rivalries, however, created so many disturbances that they were at last driven from all the approaches to the temple, and replaced by the quiet gingerbread vendors, who brought their sweet stock ready made. These gingerbread makers appear to have been, for some centuries, an orderly and kindly set of men. In the statutes granted to their corporation in 1596, they express affectionate and compassionate sentiments towards one another. A

journeyman who met a fellow journeyman in distress on the road was bound to lend him two crowns, or to become security for him for that sum. Again, if a travelling gingerbread maker heard that a fellow workman anywhere in the neighbourhood through which he was passing, was in distress, he was bound to go out of his road to help him, and to watch at his bedside. Time has not brought many changes to the article, the idea of which was, we are told, borrowed from the honey bread of ancient Rhodes; but the classification of the thousand and one developments of the pastrycook's art which modern times have seen, would fill hundreds of closely printed pages. The old woman is ambling along, under my window, shrilly crying her *plaisirs* while I am reading the evening paper after dinner, just as her great great great grandmother cried to them in the dark wicked old streets of the ancient capital; and she goes shuffling past the gorgeous establishments where the *élite* of French society languidly consume *babas*, *savarins*, and *nougats*. She

is the true child of the original French pastry-cook, and, with her simple dainties, comes direct to us from Athens. I doubt not she has a mighty contempt for the incomprehensible kickshaws she sees through the plate-glass of Félix's fashionable establishment, nor can she look with much kindness on the *darioleurs* or manufacturers of such cheap pastry, as *brioches* and cakes, which are sold by street hawkers. The only rival with whom, I suspect, she can cordially shake hands, is the gingerbread vendor, who dates from Rhodes, and who has his two weeks of glory at the *Barrière du Trône* every Easter, when the gingerbread fair is held. The pastry-cooks, however, have not reached their present condition of showy prosperity, without having braved many dangers and experienced many heartburnings. Their quarrels with the bakers have been frequent and violent. Grave lawyers have debated again and again where the baker ended and the pastrycook began. And now, when every French subject has been declared as free to make his own *baba* as he

has long been to toss his own pancake, the artist in pastry is not free from his daily anxieties. His daily troubles over the exquisitely delicate contents of his oven are heavy. The slightest burn will spoil his day's labours. He is an artist dealing with the most delicate and perishable materials. He has generally been a workman who, by thrift and incessant labour, has saved money enough to open a shop, and take the profits of his own taste and skill. Remark him as he occasionally appears in his shop of gilding and mirrors; as he peeps into the little bright steel oven at the end of the counter, where the *babas* are kept hot; and you'll see that he has a thoughtful pleasant face. He is in a snow-white dress, although he has become the master of this dazzling shop. He is the art-workman still, underneath it or behind it. He has his apprentices, whom he teaches how to minister to the sweet tooth of Paris. It appears that there are about seventeen hundred persons employed in Paris on the manufacture of pastry, and that of this number

nearly seven hundred are apprentices. The startling proportion of apprentices is easily accounted for by the fact that every youth who is being brought up as a cook, must serve some part of his time under a confectioner. Parents like also to put their children out with pastrycooks, believing that the pastrycook easily earns his livelihood; while the young apprentice on his side is delighted with the prospect of living in a land of cakes. The reality is wofully unlike the dream, as any master pastrycook is ever free to confess. In the first place, the poor little apprentice boy tastes few of the cakes. The broken and the stale ones are occasionally reserved for him. Generally, he does not get to bed until after the shop is closed at midnight. Then he must be up betimes in the morning, to trot off to the market with his master to buy butter, eggs, and fruit. It is he who carries home the heavy load of marketing in a basket upon his head. It is he who runs all the errands, and bears all the orders out to customers' houses. When he has completed his

apprenticeship, and is put in the little bakery behind the shop to help in the preparation of delicate tarts and cakes of all descriptions, all his illusions have generally vanished. He lodges and is fed at his master's house, and receives a monthly salary of about one pound. The workmen who are over him, and who have reached the top of their profession, and who are also lodged, and fed in the house, earn from two pounds ten shillings to three pounds ten shillings a month. The young journeyman finds himself associated with two or three fellow workmen, with whom he works, eats, and sleeps. They form his world. The life is so monotonous and weary that most of the journeymen pastrycooks long to change their condition, and very few of them remain in the dark little bakery to the end of their days.

Their case, however, is not so sad as that of their neighbours the confectioners, who make the vast quantities of *bonbons* of every conceivable variety, which are consumed in Paris mainly at New Year, and at Easter.

Few, if any, of the light-hearted holiday folk, who carry off *pralines* from Boissier's or *Diables roses* from Siraudin's, ever give one minute's thought to the great workshops, in the *Rue des Lombards*, where poor fellows have been working twelve hours a day in an almost red-hot atmosphere, to turn out these succulent morsels. Here sugared almonds are made by steam, so great is the demand. The sugar is boiling in vast kettles, and is carried hither and thither in little vessels by skilled men, who turn it, with the twist of the hand, into a hundred shapes. The men have rank according to their skill. He who presides over the oven whence barley-sugar and delicious syrups are evolved, may be said to be chief of the workshop; and has his annual salary of about 100*l.* a year. The second man in rank is the maker of burnt almonds—the favourite *praline* of the Parisians—and can earn something under 3*s.* 6*d.* a day. The sugared almond makers, again, are divided into first and second-class hands. The first-class man has an annual salary of about 85*l.*

per annum. The second-class men are paid by the day, and earn about 4*s*. daily. The workmen who are called officers, are the artists who make the fancy *bonbons*. They have nearly always a fixed salary of 72*l*. a year. The decorators who paint the *bonbons*, although they are expected to have considerable artistic taste, earn, as a rule, little more than 4*s*. per diem. The poor fellows, indeed, who pass so many hours in rooms like furnaces, and who are required to display great taste and skill in producing exquisite morsels for the comfit-box of a princess, are generally very badly off; because it is impossible to get work all the year round. Sometimes they are during three months, and sometimes, even during six months, without the opportunity of earning a ten-sou piece at their trade. When New Year's Day and Easter have passed and gone, the sweetmeat maker has four or five months of slack season to anticipate. He depends upon the caprices of fashion. He has not the regular trade which the cheerful old lady who sells *plaisirs* enjoys.

Winter and summer, in spite of wind and snow and rain, she comes chirping along the street in the early evening. The great season may be at an end; Trouville, Dieppe, and Biarritz may be crowded with the lions and lionesses of Paris; but there is no lack of the *plaisir* seller's little *bourgeois* customers. Young *bourgeois* has not gone to the seaside—not he! His father and mother, in their most ambitious moments, never did more in the way of pleasure travelling than a day in the forest of St. Germain, at the *Fête des Loges;* and a day at Fontainebleau, when Madame threw cakes to the carp in the tank behind the palace. All the great folk may desert the fashionable quarters: the *plaisir* seller cares not. Here are her middle-class little customers, lisping their baby French about her box, in the Bois de Boulogne, or in the Champs Elysées; and trotting off triumphantly with her sweetwares. She will neither decorate them, nor alter, by the least bend, the shape of them. The first teeth of ten thousand thousand Paris babies have approved them. They are palatable to

high and low. The mighty young count leans out of his carriage, drawn by four bleating goats, for his *plaisir;* and the mechanic's little urchin, in his white sugar-loaf nightcap, buys from the same box. Madame, the vendor, is proud of the universality of her popularity.

"At least," she says, "there is equality before the *plaisir* merchant. First come, first served. One moment, my good baron, in the hat and feathers. Little Antoine, the carpenter's son, asked before you."

CHAPTER VIII.

MONSIEUR AND MADAME PUFF.

MONSIEUR and Madame Puff must have the profoundest contempt for the clumsy contrivers of British advertisements. The poet of Moses is a barbarian when compared with these two exquisite artists, who puff so gently, and withal so discreetly and artistically, that the reader is charmed, while his pockets are opened. He laughs, while he is despoiled. He applauds, while he is robbed. Neither Monsieur nor Madame Puff would deign to write the doggrel—nor pen the puff direct—which may be found in the advertising columns of English newspapers. The lady, be it ob-

served, is a viscountess; and the gentleman is a personage of distinction, who dresses like D'Orsay; is as particular with his knife and fork as Brillat de Savarin; who would not trust his peruke to a second-rate artist for the world; whose tailor is Dusautoy; who buys his *bonbons* (or has them) at Boissier's; upon whom Pivert delicately cast his choicest perfumes; and who rests from his labours, on Tortoni's threshold.

The return of the high world is welcome to the *chroniqueur* it is true; but for the *chroniqueuse* it is a high festival. It is she who tells the world who is the lady whose taste is to be followed; and could give the reader a complete inventory of the Empress's wardrobe. The Viscountess de Renneville deigns to inform the readers of the *Patrie* what they *must* wear, if they care to live; and, with an amiability that is refreshing, the shops at which all people who respect themselves, must purchase their powder and their paint. She follows boldly in the wake of the *chroniqueurs*, and will not yield to them in courage. If the Baroness

Beaujolais will be beautiful, she must pay the penalty, and become material for a newspaper paragraph. I suspect that if the baroness paid all her bills as cheerfully as she pays this, she would be popular with the tradesmen of the Rue Richelieu and the Chaussée d'Antin. In her own country, it is alleged by the malicious, that ladies love to be seen and admired, and that they can bear admiration for many hours together. Be this as it may, I brave contradiction when I state that if the fashionable ladies of Paris suffer when their charms, their graces, and their taste are "put into the newspapers," their martyrdom must last, ay, sometimes longer than their charms. Publicity appears to be the price they pay for beauty. Some pay who ought not to be taxed. Does a lady sing? She may have as much idea of dancing on the tight-rope as of warbling her wood-notes wild in a concert-room. Yet she shall not escape the *chroniqueur*. She may get clear of the *grands journeaux*, but not the *petits*. An infinitely small *chroniqueur* babbles in an infinitely small

paper; and Madame unconsciously furnishes her paragraph to the fly that was buzzing about the *soirée intime*. The little thing meant no harm. He had his columns gaping. Rather did he mean to be *gracieux*, and that Madame should thank him. He has put her on a pedestal. It is true it is no higher than the thickness of a wine-biscuit, but he has done his little best. And, provided we all do our best, some thanks are due to us. The lofty pedestals are for the great ladies. They eat *soupe-aux-choux*, who cannot order a *suprême*.

See how royally a Viscountess sets to work! But then she empties her *largesse* out of a coronet; and the crowds about her are of the first quality. She begins by telling her readers that she has great news to give them: "Fashionable ladies (who make fine or bad weather in the world of fashion) wear hats so small that they fall into the category of *bibis* hats. We are told that it is the English fashion. Will France consent to give up her prerogative in matters of taste?

All the costumes now in vogue are of the English type. Jackets, waistcoats, boots, tucked petticoats, veils tight to the face, and little turban hats garnished with a bird's wing. I look every where in vain for Paris fashions. The traditional simplicity and elegance are disappearing. Women no longer wear toilettes, they wear costumes. Fashion is only an open-air carnival. What is to be done? Protest? What shall we say? Let us indicate where rich and artistic taste is still to be found. We are backed by a very high authority. Be it remembered that it was the decrees of the Ex-Empress that put an end to these too audacious toilettes, into which ladies of fashion had thrown themselves, as into a steeple-chase. Eccentricity proves nothing. She is the daughter of Folly and Burlesque. True elegance captivates public opinion, and never disgusts it." With this flourish of trumpets—of silver trumpets—the Viscountess proceeds to tell her readers how the world of fashion is to be set right again; and France is to resume the enjoy-

ment of her prerogative in matters of dress. She gives the name and address of the patriotic millinery establishment; but, since I confess that I am not quite so much interested in the house in question as her ladyship appears to be, I shall give the initial only of the great milliner who has deserved so well of her country, and of the Viscountess. Let the reader mark with what a dainty hand her ladyship touches the shop:—

"The Maison G—— has remained what it always was, in spite of all the burlesque fashions that have been produced, and are still being produced. The Maison G—— has discerned that France would sooner or later retake possession of her acquired rights; and has awaited the reaction that is now appearing. Not that the Maison G—— took no initiative—far from it. The Maison G—— dictates laws in the dominions of ladies of society and of rich foreigners who never follow the vagaries of the age. Instead of repelling fancy, the Maison G—— propagates it; but holds that it should be an ex-

pression of our own nationality, and not of that of foreigners. Here are the last creations of the Maison G——."

Follow—lists of dresses, laces, &c. The Maison G——, we are told, has distinguished itself at Compiègne by a Lyons blue velvet dress, in the style "our mothers wore at the time of the Directory." But "our mothers," we are reminded, could not boast the "*habit sportsman*," which is now the pride of the Maison G——. After some warmly coloured descriptions of other triumphs of the Maison G——, the Viscountess is fairly carried away by her enthusiasm. "Do you know," she exclaims, presuming disdainfully on the ignorance of her readers, "do you know, or have I told you, that the Maison G—— is enlarging its lace department, which is to be an artistic speciality of European fame? G——'s laces will be cited as masterpieces. They will not admit of comparisons, because G—— dominates the trade in cashmeres, silks, dresses, intelligent innovations, and consequently in lace."

From the Maison G—— the Viscountess turns in ecstasy to the Ville de Lyon. She is poetic over the gloves and petticoats. And then she lets her readers into a secret, with delightful grace. "A bit of intimate confidence—Her Majesty the Empress wears little veils, spotted and fringed with chenille, and sprinkled with jet beads. Do you love secrets? All ladies delight in them, especially when they are on the subject of beauty." The Viscountess becomes skittish:—"Suppose I give you the means of being beautiful for many years,—for always,—will you grant that I have some talent and a little influence? Bear in mind, that, in order to please you and to be useful to you at the same time, I penetrate every where, even into chemical laboratories. If we lived in the time of the Ruggieris and the Cagliostros, it would be horrible; for, perhaps they would show me Satan, as at Robin's. *But*, in the laboratory of Madame D., No. —, Rue de Grenelle St. Honoré, I have found a young and charming woman, who does not in the least resemble a

magician or an astrologer, and who deals conscientiously with woman's beauty, just as a horticulturist cultivates rare flowers in a hothouse. Madame D. gives learned consultations in the art of putting back the clock of life. She owns precious receipts for fading beauty." Follow—lists of the lady's cosmetics and waters, with the price of the *flacon*. The Viscountess is good, indeed, to her readers. They shall not, if she can help it, have a defect; men and women who read the *Patrie* shall alike be "beautiful for ever." Therefore the Viscountess takes up in her delicate hands one of the electrical tooth-brushes of Doctor L. Addressing her readers, she says:—"Doctor L. appears to me like the Balthazar Claès of Balzac in the *Recherche de l'Absolu*. He has found a new vital element in chemistry. The most shattered teeth are strengthened. Did the ogre in *Tom Thumb* use an electrical tooth-brush? This brush, with the Doctor's dental elixir (the *dépôt* is in the *Rue de Ménars*), is 'a miraculous talisman.'" From the miraculous tooth-

brush, the Viscountess travels gracefully to Parma violet powder, violet oil, and violet soap.

I know there are ill-natured people who will put all her ladyship's grace and love of the elegant down as so much puffery. I confess that it would take space to prove that her ladyship is as simple and guileless as a shepherdess. But *allons donc*, would the Viscountess de Renneville be guilty of a *réclame?* Was she not in the confidence of the Empress? It appears to me that she is merely a little indiscreet. She has been carried away by her admiration of the patriotism of the Maison G——, and by her valiant resolve not to be outwitted by the audacious band of *chroniqueurs*, who sit every evening at that famous table in the *Café Grosse Tête.*

Madame has a husband, who attends to the graceful puffery of men's fashions, giving himself the airs of a D'Orsay. He is a shabby *fine fleur* at the best. He has a few dozen sentences and quotations, which he uses *ad nauseam*, but which please his

customers or the journals which employ him. Say he has a fashionable hairdresser in hand. He writes an album for him, and invents names for varieties of head-dresses. I have one of these specimens of Monsieur Puff's ingenuity before me. The hairdresser is the renowned Monsieur de Byst, of the Faubourg St. Honoré. He has invented, we are informed, twenty-four new styles for dressing the human hair. Monsieur Puff runs through and gracefully recommends them. The Pompadour is a charming composition, so called after the favourite of Louis the Fifteenth, whose taste in the dressing of her hair was exquisite. The Goddess has a *grandiose* effect. The *Incroyable* is in a rich style, that makes us long for its general adoption. The First Step, a charming arrangement for the hair of a young lady just entering the world. The Sovereign gives great sweetness and softness to the face of a blonde. The New Diana is graceful and bold in outline.

And so Monsieur Puff works, side by side, with Madame the Viscountess.

CHAPTER IX.

TWO DELUGES OF BONBONS.

THE end of the old year and the first day of the New Year supply the observant stranger with material enough to make up a dozen sparkling comedies. At this festive season of the year it is the custom of Paris ladies to receive as many presents as their relatives, friends, and acquaintances may be pleased to give them,—or may give them without being pleased. The lady sits in her *salon* on New Year's Day—in festive dress—to receive her friends' presents,—and her friends, since these must be bearers of the presents. Her face is wreathed in smiles;

and she exhausts herself in expressions of hypocritical astonishment as each visitor produces his addition to the general stock. They come trooping up! There is no need to ask the *concierge* whether Madame is at home. Is the pump in the yard at home? Is the bell-pull at home? Would a troop of the Municipal Guard have the strength to remove Madame from that seat in the *salon*, where she is receiving her taxes? An unsophisticated foreigner, seated at Madame's side, is simple enough to think that these satin bags of chocolate creams; these marqueterie tables; these bronzes of Voltaire from the vestibule of the Théâtre Française; these *bonbon* boxes of costliest enamel; this onyx tray, on which Madame will cast the diamonds from her fingers to-night (having narrowly examined it to see whether the price-mark has been inadvertently left upon it)—are voluntary gifts brought to the lady's feet, as but the most trifling and unworthy tokens of the givers' friendship. Gifts forsooth!—they are *étrennes!*

Let the reader who desires to know exactly the meaning of *étrennes*, and how the word is understood in Paris at the present time, consult the Paris papers in December and January. He will see the spirit in which this gigantic tax is levied—and is paid. The French are undoubtedly the most ingenious people on the continent of Europe. They say that they are at the head of civilization; that they are not travellers, because, to travel beyond their frontiers is to journey from perfection to imperfection—an explanation which is open to dispute. Their claim to superlative ingenuity may, however, I think, be at once conceded to them. A few instances of startling ingenuity in the way of mispelling are included in the *étrennes* of information which the papers gave to their readers last new year. It is New Year's Day 1864. The *Opinion National* is most conspicuous in ingenious incorrectness. *La Presse*, wherein Emile de Girardin drums to an obstinately deaf world, has some rich errors in its records of John

Bull's doings: but the *Opinion* may boldly challenge every other purveyor of ignorance. This journal publishes the World's Obituary for 1863: and informs its readers that England has lost among other worthies—"Maurice Landsclowne, ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, President of the Cabinet, and of the Privy Council"—"Sir Taton Syke"—"Sir Georhe Cornwal Levis," and "the poet and composer Ch. Glow"—author of "Jeannette and Jeannot." In addition to these losses, we have to deplore the death—according to the *Opinion*, of "Augustus Leopold Ileg"—a distinguished painter. The two last names are incomparably ingenious transformations of Charles Glover and Augustus Egg.

It is at the toymakers—in the sweet realms of Boissier, Siraudin, or Marquis—in the crystal saloons of the Palais Royal—in the show-rooms of Susse or Giroux—and, for the poorer folk, in the deal boxes that line the Boulevards—that the inexhaustible ingenuity of the French inventive faculty is to be found

at its very wildest freaks. One present which the *bonne* makes to her young Monsieur on New Year's morn is made of white sugar and chocolate: the design is indescribable in the pages of an English book. We English may be, as our neighbours assert, foolishly squeamish; but no argument would persuade the least squeamish among us that the *bonne's* gift was not at once coarse and nasty. Why not a chocolate dust-hole? On the Boulevard des Italiens have been ranged, for the laughter of the passers-by, a series of nude figures, recommending themselves as presents, by the outrageous indecency of their attitudes. They have gone off briskly, amid the merriment of the holiday-makers, at very good prices. But these were trifles light as air, and had nothing to do with the serious business, on which every unhappy bachelor was bound last New Year's Eve. For this morning, visits had been paid to the saloons of Giroux and of Tahan. The Emperor had been among the costly trifles; and had deigned to select some most expensive inutilities. The shops of the

great tradesmen of the Boulevards and the Rue de la Paix had been packed with dismal purchasers until midnight. Men were stationed at the doors of pet confectioners' shops, to regulate the entrances and exits of the thousands of actors who were bound to play a part on the morrow. In vain did they now and then hug themselves in the belief that they had discovered something quite new, that was very cheap. Their friends quickly undeceived them. By the costliness of their doings on New Year's Eve, would they be judged throughout 1864. Their gift would lie upon Madame's table with heaps of others; and it must not be the worst—that is, the cheapest—of the collection. You cannot deceive Madame, I assure you.

I was surveying the collection of New Year taxes which had been levied by Madame de H. Her fair daughter was at hand. I lifted a very pretty box, lightly and brightly put together. I remarked that the taste shown in it was exquisite. The young lady shrugged her shoulders, and answered—"That, Mon-

sieur: I'm sure it didn't cost ten francs!" Unhappy wight is he who had given that exquisite little box of sweetmeats to Madame de H. It is true that he is only a young *employé* at the Ministry of the Interior, and that he has only a very few hundred francs per annum: nevertheless, he should not have done this thing. He should have put the watch his mother gave him into "Piety's fair Mount"—and have lived for a month or two on *haricots*—and, in this way, afforded to march boldly into the renowned establishment of Siraudin. These are not the days for sentimental gifts. Gifts are not held to the heart: they are appraised. There are people here who are known to stint themselves and their families for months, in order to make a grand appearance, as distributors of gorgeous *étrennes* on New Year's Day. I heard of one family a few weeks since, who decided to remain away from Paris during this "festive season of the year," because the *étrennes* they were compelled to give last year cost them 20,000 francs—or eight hundred

pounds! This sum may appear an exaggeration to the simple reader; but it is not a startling one to the observer who has been a watchful atom in the crowds that have seen the articles in the shops of the toymakers, the chocolate manufacturers, the confectioners, and the jewellers of Paris. Time was when children were content with the rough horse, the bran doll, and the plain battledore and shuttlecock. But see the luxury that is unfolded to the sight of Paris children in these days! Here are dolls that are to be bought for gold; dolls' furniture at prices that would comfort much living nakedness and suffering of the poor arrondissements; toy boats (to float in the fountain basin of the Tuileries Gardens), at the price of a mechanic's week's labour; mimic warriors, and cannon and drums and trumpets almost as dear as man's war finery. Hither must the taxed of New Year's day come: for Madame has children —and children who know what good toys are. They are keen house-wives, and calculate to a fraction what a doll's toilette ap-

paratus should cost. Their dolls wear real lace; have wardrobes crammed with expensive dresses; and sport boots made by the first bootmakers. So Madame's children are not to be put off with simple trifles. "The contest is," I heard a man say at a *café*, as he chuckled at the idea, which he kept steadily before him, that all his friends were abroad in the country—"the contest is, who shall give a candle, and get a column."

Just as certain shrewd commercial men of the city of London have been known to declare their income to the income-tax gatherer to be ten thousand pounds when it was only half this sum, the ambitious Parisian implies that he is wealthy, on New Year's Day, by giving presents he cannot afford. The shopkeepers have humoured this social weakness to the utmost. Their ingenuity and daring have kept pace with his extravagance. And the result has just been seen—and laughed at, and stared at, and squibbed. M. Siraudin, dramatist and confectioner, has known his Paris too long and well to make a

mistake, when endeavouring to humour his fellow-citizens. He has a clear perception of the direction in which the wind sets. A more sagacious nose is not shown along the whole length of the Boulevards. The public should have an expensive plaything; and he would set it up in his shop, and crowds should besiege his doors.

Siraudin made a doll: dressed it in blue velvet, covered it with real English point lace, and sprinkled it with *real* diamonds, until it was worth something more than one thousand pounds sterling! He planted this precious toy upon a pedestal: the *chroniqueurs* went to work—and in a few days there were mighty crowds in the Rue de la Paix. Siraudin was in everybody's mouth—and so were Siraudin's *bonbons*. The papers told the public how many reams of paper, how many pounds of sugar, how many yards of gold and silver cord Siraudin consumed in the service of his thousands of customers. On New Year's Day, Madame prized the satin bags full of sweetmeats, or *diables*, white or red, that were

marked "Siraudin." The *Charivari* poked fun at the doll; and published drawings of little girls in the Tuileries Gardens carrying dolls ornamented with diamonds and lace—and escorted, for safety, by a corporal's guard of *piou-pious*. In his doll, M. Siraudin showed the dramatist rather than the confectioner. He pointed his joke with diamonds—and so assured its success.

Just as on New Year's Day the ladies and children of Paris are agog; wondering who will be generous and who will be mean, so on Easter Sunday speculation is rife on the extent of the booty each household will secure. Ay, *secure* is the word, in default of a stronger one. Let us not be too nice. Stand not on the order of your giving, but give. Lent is at an end, and the days of Boissier and Siraudin have come again. Their rival windows are packed with sweetmeats of the costliest description. They cater only for heavily laden purses. The modest may go elsewhere. Are there not red eggs in the barrows of the "merchants of the four

seasons," and in the greengrocers' windows? The poor *bourgeois* can buy his chocolate egg for a few sous to delight his children; but Siraudin and Boissier have nought to do with the offspring of little shopkeepers, as a glance at their gorgeous establishments will satisfy any beholder. Siraudin replaced the New Year's doll with an exquisitely modelled Cupid, and the crowds came back again, and the establishment was packed with exquisites buying Easter eggs full of *bonbons*, and costly surprises of every description. Siraudin is inexhaustible in the production of artistic whims, all expensive enough to satisfy the extravagance of the luckiest of stockbrokers. It being necessary to make Easter offerings in the shape of an egg, good M. Siraudin invented birds' nests of costly material (with real birds of gorgeous plumage fluttering over their sugar eggs). He had humming-birds with Easter eggs under them. Let the vulgar imitate him with a hedge-sparrow if they pleased, he was safe with his expensive skins. He would plant loving birds upon the eggs

his customers should buy, and in this way at Easter, as on New Year's Day, reign supreme. It was charming to see the spirit in which the facetious journals remarked on the crowds of unhappy male victims, who were bound to carry these costly eggs to their female acquaintance. It is insinuated that the finest golden eggs fell to the share of the avaricious ladies who dwell round about Notre Dame de Lorette; elderly gentlemen being bound to offer ostrich eggs, while the *gandin* of twenty-two may carry to his adorable creature an egg no larger than that of a wren.

The Parisians were, moreover, amused with a happy sketch. Two ladies, gaudily dressed, are sitting amid their Easter offerings holding a friendly conversation. They have evidently taken a careful and accurate estimate of the value of the offerings. A sad thought has just struck one lady. There are no more forced levies on their friends possible before January the First, 1865. "Couldn't we invent some form of contribution for Michaelmas?" she asks her companion. M. Siraudin

might help the ladies to an idea. Michaelmas geese with golden eggs in them might take; but, unfortunately for the fair tax-gatherers, the tax-payers are at Baden, or Trouville, or Biarritz, in September.

Among the Easter offerings made to the public in 1864, however, the enormous literary egg of M. de Villemessant is the most remarkable. It is called the *Grand Journal*, and a great journal it is [1]. Its page is exactly one yard high and two feet in breadth. The editor says the French people wanted a lively weekly paper, with plenty in it, and he offers them amusement and the events of the week by the yard? The first number is undoubtedly amusing, and in no part more so than where the editor publishes a series of letters from his friends approving his scheme. The great or Big Journal is not a weekly newspaper; it is a weekly gossip. It abounds with anecdotes more or less personal; it recounts personal experiences with freedom. For instance, M. de Villemessant gossips about

[1] It had a short life, and is now forgotten: 1870.

D'Orsay's tailor, and tells how, about twenty years ago, there lived in the Galerie de Valois, Palais Royal, a tailor—or, rather, an *artiste*—renowned for his waistcoat-making. The famous Count D'Orsay was a great patron of his, and he often went to London simply to take the Count's orders. This tailor, whose name was Blanc, was a clever fellow, with a taste for literature; he read every thing that came out, and was thoroughly up in all the great questions of the day. He was the first to discover in Louis Ulbach, his compatriot, then young and unknown, the future man of talent, the clever and distinguished novelist of to-day. By dint of daily contact with an aristocratic *clientèle*, Blanc had gained a certain polish, which, however, had nothing pretentious about it. He was the son of a peasant, and had quitted his native village on foot, in order to make his way in the world. "I do not know the name of the village," M. de Villemessant goes on to say, "but it could not have been Guerande, for in that case Blanc would not have been obliged to leave it

to make his fortune—a man's wealth being there estimated according to the number of waistcoats he wears. While himself almost a child, he had become godfather to a little girl, who afterwards was left an orphan. When this happened, Blanc brought the child to Paris, and watched over her growth with a father's care. She was pretty and good, and so, by-and-by, the love of Blanc began to change its character, and he resolved to marry his god-daughter. She, in her turn, loved him, and the matter was arranged. Suddenly, however, the girl, whose lungs had always been delicate, fell seriously ill. The doctors prescribed change of air, and she was sent to Ville d'Avray. Thither every day went poor Blanc, snatching a few hours from his business, and taking with him a little present of fresh flowers or early fruit for his *fiancée*. I often happened to meet him at the station, and then I was invariably made the confidant of his hopes and fears concerning the poor invalid. At the end of a year the young girl died, and was buried in the pretty

cemetery of Ville d'Avray. This cemetery, unlike more pretentious places of its kind, is not a sculptor's studio, but simply a garden for the dead, where the trees, flowers, and insects all whisper the lullaby of those who sleep the eternal sleep. Every Sunday Blanc went to Ville d'Avray, and passed the day regretting, weeping, and praying at the tomb of his *fiancée*. Towards evening, more tranquil, he would go and sit in the little summer-house of the *Restaurant de la Grille*, kept by the guard of the forest. The sister of this guard was a widow, and, full of sympathy and compassion, she listened, Sunday after Sunday, to the history of poor Blanc's disappointment. To listen was in some sort to console, and amongst these three personages, the lover, the dead *fiancée*, and the living confidante, there was at last but one love, and Blanc married the widow. Unhappily, however, he was not cured of his grief; marriage failed to take from him the memory of his lost love; he became more and more absorbed, and his melancholy at last

ended in monomania. His reason returned to him, however, with the thunders of the Revolution of 1848. At the sound of the cannon of the Chateau d'Eau, Blanc awoke from his dream,—passed his hand over his forehead, as if the popular tumult had cleared his clouded brain,—took his gun, kissed his wife, rushed out to his duty as a National Guard, and formed one of the escort of a Princess and a mother, who to the last, struggled, with all her might, against the dangers of the *émeute* and the desertion of her partisans. The tumult and confusion which attended the departure of the royal family from the Palais Bourbon after the regency had been put aside by the people will not, even at this distance of time, have been forgotten. The young Duc de Chartres had been separated from his mother, been recognized in the crowd, seized by the collar, and would, no doubt, have been strangled, if the intervention of a brave, timely arm had not occurred to spare this crime to the Annals of the Revolution. That arm was Blanc's. At

the same moment, M. de Girardin and M. de Larochejaquelein were presenting themselves as shields for the Comte de Paris against the fury of an insurgent. I am wrong, however, in saying Blanc was alone in the defence. A dozen loyal and courageous men followed and aided him in his energetic intervention; and two years afterwards, on the 24th of February, the anniversary of the day, they each received from the Duchess of Orleans an emerald pin surrounded by diamonds in the form of 'forget-me-nots.' The gifts were accompanied by a letter, which concluded thus, 'Thanks to you, who protected our weakness.' The revolution ruined the poor tailor; his reason also again left him, never to return. He died mad, ten or twelve years ago; and his last words were of '48. 'Save the children,' he cried; 'hide the treasure!'"

Blanc left a will, in which he expressed a wish to be buried at Ville d'Avray; but it was found that there was no available spot in the little cemetery. His friends were intending, reluctantly, to apply elsewhere, when, on

looking over the cemetery books, it was discovered that a grave which had been granted for ten years, had just then become vacant. This grave was the grave of poor Blanc's lost love, and in it he was placed. It is given to every-day life sometimes to enact extraordinary dramas; of which, it seems, even tailors may be the sentimental heroes. May poor Blanc's honest head lie lightly upon his goose!

He had not many imitators on the 4th of September, 1870. M. Ferdinand de Lesseps alone "protected the weakness" of the Empress Eugenie. Not one of the hundreds whom her bountiful hand had benefited was a shield to her in her extremity.

CHAPTER X.

A BOHEMIAN PAR EXCELLENCE.

PARIS has produced a very remarkable army of picturesque Bohemians, who have amused, often astonished, and sometimes scandalized, the quiet inhabitants of the great city of pleasure. Henri Murger, Nadar, Alfred Delvaux, Pierre Dupont (lately gone to his rest), and a host of others, have described their revels and their orgies, their practical jokes at *cafés*, and how they often lived, or rather starved, from hand to mouth. They turned their wild oats into golden grain. "Champfleury's Confessions of Sylvius" are revelations made in the very frankest spirit.

Paris knows how gay were Antoine Faucher, Hippolyte, Boillot, Guichardt, Jean Wallon, and last, and most picturesque of all, Privat D'Anglemont, in their threadbare coats, and with not two halfpence to rattle together in their pockets.

D'Anglemont's history was, as his friend Delvau relates it, wanting neither in interest nor in adventure. Let me take up M. Delvau's colours, and present the reader with an outline of the Bohemian *par excellence*, whose memory still lingers lovingly with many reformed rakes of his acquaintance. I asked an old *café* frequenter, who, I knew, had gone through all the *cafés* of Bohemia on the Seine, whether he knew poor Privat. My friend had long since reaped his crop of wild oats, and had become a grave ill-paid music master, but at the name of Privat his eyes sparkled and his cheeks flushed with pleasure. "Knew him?" said he, "I should think I did!"

Walking in the streets of Paris you elbow thousands of passers-by to whom you do not pay the least attention. They are probably

not worth attention. They are individuals without individuality, medals without effigy, coins without date. These passers-by form the multitude, the mass, the flock. They are born, they live, they die, one knows not how —and one has really no need to know. They are not human creatures—they are shadows. They pass away without ever having existed. And yet, apparently, they are precisely those favoured by an inconsistent Providence. They are the happy, the joyous, the peaceful, the dependants of the law, of life, and of chance! They have wives, children, families, property, shoes, clothes, and money; and I know not what more! In one word, they enjoy themselves. But, besides these, pass and repass —sad sometimes, dreamers often, poor always —fine and striking figures, that have a physiognomy, a colour, a relief, an originality, a date, a signification: they are artists, poets, thinkers, searchers, restless vagabonds—enamoured of glory, infatuated with idle fancies, indulgers in dreams. They are the true members of the *Burschenschaft*—they are men!

They are, also, three-quarters of their time, poor and suffering, badly clothed, and with hardly a shoe to their feet—because with them, unlike other people, it is beauty that leads the beast, and not the beast that leads beauty. They may have genius, perhaps; they certainly have talent and wit. They are the chosen of Nature, full of intelligence and of heart. They know how to love, they feel enthusiasm, they have the sense of life, they have a knowledge of good and of evil, of the grand and beautiful!

And the crowd—the ignorant, the half-witted, the Philistines—the crowd covers them with disdain, with injuries, with mud, instead of showering them with flowers, caresses, and bank-notes. The crowd sees only the worn coat seams! But I know the crowd, and it is a bad knowledge: I know it. Here are eighteen hundred years that you prefer Barabbas the rogue, to the apostle: Jean Hiroux to Jean Journet!

When leaving Athens, Demosthenes turned round, stretched out his hands, and cried,

"O Minerva, patroness of this town, why do you take pleasure in three such wicked beasts —the owl, the dragon, and the crowd?"

Demosthenes was right. The crowd is the eternal history of the grasshopper and the ant. The crowd is proud, because it works to be able to give to a poor devil of a horse that toils in the furrows, in the broad sunlight, labouring to bring home provisions that will last through the days of cold and famine.

The ant ignores, I see, that each creature has its work to do, here below; and that those who are proud of being attached to an equipage, or of using a sting, will never, never be attached to any work of the imagination, or manage the pen, the pencil, or the graver. God knows what He has made. He created thee, miserable creature, for the work of thy paws: work! work! work! Come, and go from here, from there; fly, hills and valleys, in search of corn, of grain, of the fortune that thy rapacious instincts prompt thee to amass! It is thy part, thy function, to treasure up, to monopolize! But never injure the poor

singers who come and ask of thee a piece of bread when they are hungry; thou hast the right to refuse them, simply as an animal without heart as thou art; but thou hast not the right to injure and goad them as thou dost, spiritless creature!

Bohemian, you must not be afraid of answering, when you have occasion, this cowardly and miserable lesson of the ant—whether they have paws or nailed shoes, it is all the same—by another lesson that it will probably never understand, alas! You must not be afraid of telling the workmen in fields and in towns—who thinks so little of art and poetry—this elementary truth, to know, that the work of the brain is quite as sacred as the work of the arm, quite as meritorious, quite as heroic, quite as laborious — when it is not more so—since it produces works which often have the duration of brass. Therefore do not laugh so foolishly, you rustics in wooden shoes and waggoners' dresses, at that pale thin man in coat and shoes who passes your farm so quietly: he is a poet who writes books

that will console your wives; he is an artist who paints pictures that your sons will admire; he is a scholar who searches, and who will find a method to lighten the cares of your life, money-loving creatures that you are. Do not laugh at him, peasants of the towns and of country, and do not refuse him the glass of water, the piece of brown bread he asks of you because he is hungry and thirsty, and has forgotten to economize the necessary sous for his wants to-day and to-morrow. Why should the rogue laugh at the thief, the ass at the horse, the frog at the bee, the blade of grass at the star, the labourer at the poet, the peasant at the singer? All creatures are equal before the Creator, who loves them all equally, and looks at them with an impartial eye. If He did not pity you, how He would hate you —working ants—even as you hate the careless grasshoppers of the future!

The future? The grasshoppers are right in giving no thought to the morrow. They are right to sing. Sing, sing, sing, careless grasshopper! Dance even, as the ant ironi-

cally invites thee. Thou wilt always live as long as she—whom the foot of a passenger will crush directly. Thou wilt always live as long as she, and thou wilt have sung, have danced, and laughed, at least, during the short hours of thy short existence. She, the ant, will have amassed—for others!

Alexandre Privat D'Anglemont was one of these despised members of the crowd. By this title—and by others also—I raise him from the oblivion into which it was wished he should fall.

He was born at Sainte-Rose, in the most poetic corner of the most poetic of the Antilles, some forty-three years ago.

His father—but why should we not imitate, on this subject, the discretion of which he gave a proof himself? He who had the right to lift the veil that hid his civil condition, never did so: why should we? Privat had had a father, like all the world, because, as according to Bridoison, one is always somebody's son. He had had a father and a mother, and if he revered the one, he respected

also the other. From whomever he came, he felt he was well-born—that sufficed him. After all, it is not the parchment that makes the gentleman. Happy are the first distinguished men of their families, instead of being merely a sprig!

Privat had no name: he made himself one, and, in order to wear it with greater ease, he came to Paris, where he did his good works, having for companions in his studies two sons of the King Louis Philippe.

His studies finished, and his Bachelor's diploma in his pocket, he thought at first of becoming a doctor. But "art is long, and life is short." Privat soon saw that this profession would not suit him, and gave up the idea.

He was very young then, and did not know whither to direct his activity. The unknown has great seductions for the imagination at twenty: twenty loves to drift away without oar or compass, at the mercy of the water and chance. Privat, careless and adventurous, went whichever way the Parisian wind blew him.

It is thus that he became an author. It were bootless to follow Privat step by step in his literary career. He moved rapidly. He had genius: he spent it on his road with his money, throwing both about him on all sides, and inventing excuses to spread them, when there were none at hand.

Great quantities of his articles were scattered where it is almost impossible to find them. Those which M. Delahays collected were only found after long and laborious searches. There were some in the *Picturesque Magazine*, in the *Corsair*, and in the *Family Magazine*, in the *Paris Gazette*, in *Figaro*, in the *Siècle*, in the *Messenger*, &c., &c., &c. Privat never thought of collecting them. He worked only with a view to his contemporaries, and not to posterity. Contemporaries are two steps from you; posterity is several thousand miles before you, and it is too far for those who fear long voyages. Privat lived and wrote from hand to mouth. This indifference as regards his works explains itself by Privat's indifference as to where he lived. He lived gaily and carelessly, now rich, now poor,

writing where he could, talking more than he wrote, encouraging others, and never discouraging himself. As to interesting himself beyond measure, in that which constitutes our well-being and our happiness, he never thought of it—he was happy in his own way, as the birds are on their boughs. The birds sing: Privat sang, that is to say, talked and wrote. He was never surprised in a complaining humour, never, either, in a mood to speak evil of his fellow-creatures.

Heir to Pierre Gringoire and François Villon, Privat was indefatigable in his walks about Paris—about the old streets that he knew so well. He also, involuntarily or voluntarily, was a vagabond—a Bohemian without a penny—he explored valiantly the under parts of Paris. He was at home with everybody—on the Boulevards, or on the Montagne Sainte Génévième! He was a useful and observant wanderer, and picked up materials very much like the chiffonniers. He wrote day by day his "Small Trades," and his "Unknown Industries." These will be valuable

books of reference for the future historians, who may write the history of Paris during the nineteenth century.

Few people knew Privat, although he was known by all Paris. They would persist in seeing in him only a Bohemian—a man without home—an incorrigible somnambulist—a literary Wandering Jew. A wanderer he was, and a *farceur*, but he was something more.

It is true that he often slept under the blue, after having supped at the table of Chance; but I believe that this may happen sometimes to the most respectable people in the world, and that the warrant of householder is not precisely indispensable in obtaining the esteem of one's fellow-citizens. No one has ever dreamed of reproaching Gerard de Nerval, that he was not a man of property; it was not thought a crime in Diderot, that he did not die a millionaire: why should the world be more severe towards Privat?

Why? No one knows why. The public has certain days of such severity, and when

once it has judged a man, it does not alter its opinion, thinking it, no doubt, infallible.

The public was deceived about Privat, that is all. It was deceived, because it did not know him enough, I repeat, though knowing him very well. It may be that the Parisians do not like people whom they have seen in their capital too long; old faces become disagreeable. The Athenians become weary of hearing Aristides called the Just. The Parisians were weary of hearing Privat incessantly talked of: they were weary also of hearing him talk,—although he had always the same wit and the same heart, the same smile, and the same youthfulness. Privat did not weary because he was, before all, a spectator of life, and that finding it amusing he always found a new pleasure in seeing it played before him. His schoolfellows of Henry the Fourth's College had become men: Privat had remained a child. To a certain class he became a sort of legendary person, on whose back all sorts of extravagances and follies

might be heaped. A great many of those who talked of Privat had never seen him; but they discussed him, endowing him with vices, and boasting of having lent him money—probably because they knew that he had neither the one nor the other.

The newspapers, also, contributed to this scandal about Privat. When a *chroniqueur* wanted a name for a Bohemian, he took that of Privat D'Anglemont, who never claimed it. Where would have been the good in claiming it? Must we not allow the course of human malignity to run, as we allow water to run? "Alas! dear, dead friend," cries Privat's biographer, "human malignity, in re-uniting its thousand and one streams, formed a torrent, and all but drowned thee!"

Happily, Privat was an excellent swimmer, and his reputation came out safe and sound from the perils that encompassed it, by the foolishness of others and his own carelessness. All the little clouds that obscured his name in the eyes of the sound portion of the public faded away on the day of his death, before his

coffin, which so many of his friends followed —honourable and illustrious friends, wielders of the pen and pencil!

Death came quickly upon him. One cannot descend to the depths of the Parisian abyss with impunity. One cannot explore with impunity the shallow social waters where so many monstrosities swarm. Privat D'Anglemont lived in unknown Paris, and unknown Paris killed him. In spite of his vigorous organization, in spite of the strength of his nature, which tempted him to bear the heaviest showers, Privat fell a victim to the dangerous habits that he had gradually formed, and that he could not give up. His nights were passed in roaming through the streets of the great city, in search of the impossible, the strange, and the new. He, who walked incessantly, was obliged at last to stop. He, who was as free as a bird, was at last compelled to allow himself to be confined in that sinister cage called the hospital.

Do not think that his gaiety and his genius had abandoned him with his health. Quite

the contrary. In spite of illness, in spite of the atmosphere of the hospital, in spite of the cries of the sufferers, in spite of the railing of the dying, he still sang and laughed, this charming literary Bohemian. He brightened the sick and dying by his wit, that shone for the last time.

After having passed a winter at La Charité, he wished to come out, freshened by the odours of spring that came to him from neighbouring gardens. He came out; but only to fall ill again. Death had already marked him for his own, as a man to conquer, an intellect to put out. He was consumptive.

He then entered the Hôpital Lariboisière.

None of his friends ever hoped he would leave it alive. The news of his death was even brought to his friends one morning by an official of the hospital, who had left him in, as he thought, his dying agonies. But his hour had not quite come: a little struggle more for life, and Privat was gone. His rich Creole organization fought energetically against the

invasions of death, and at times gave hope that it would triumph.

Privat hoped so also, and he formed projects for voyages without end. When we are near the grave we love to touch our cradle. He dreamed of going to Sainte-Rose, on the other side of the Atlantic!

He dreamt so often of it, he wished it so much, that he forced death to loosen its hold for a moment, and one morning left the Hôpital Lariboisière.

Any other man would not have hesitated. He would have profited by this respite accorded him by illness to fly from Paris—the murderous city, and would have gone towards those countries where the sun shines, towards those paradises of the Antilles, from which ungrateful man banishes himself.

But Privat was too Parisian to leave Paris thus. He was not born by the Seine, but he understood that he ought to die there.

He had only left the Hôpital Lariboisière two or three days, when he was obliged to go and knock at the door of the Dubois Maison

de Santé—the hospital for the members of the Society of Men of Letters.

That was his last halt before the great departure. Thanks to the kind attention of the Director, Privat had a room to himself—a room, clean, airy, gay, and as snug as possible. He had never been so well lodged, never been so well cared for. The Bohemian was about to die in the bed of a citizen.

"Dear child, it is finished!" he said to his friend one morning as he entered his room.

He showed a serenity of spirit that proved he was thoroughly aware of his hopeless state.

His friend pressed his hand and let him say his last words.

"All the people here are so good to me," said he. "I should be really so happy, if I did not feel so ill. I have only one fear, that is of dying in the night. At night, alone, without a friend beside me—it is horrible! While in broad sunlight, as at present, with familiar faces and hearts near me, it is good

and comforting; one does not seem to be going alone." He stopped, exhausted by the efforts he had made. Then, as he perceived his friend's sadness, he talked cheerfully of all sorts of things; but, although he tried, he could no longer smile.

Memory had not yet abandoned him any more than his heart had. He remembered François Villon, and repeated several pages.

There is a profound melancholy in this last scene of the celebrated Bohemian's life. The mind reverts to the lithe figure of the gay fellow murmuring his song along the Boulevards; wearing his shabbiness with pride; elbowing dull Respectability on the kerbstone; and wasting the precious hours of youth in follies of every hue. Between the young, the songful, the witty roysterer, whom Paris has laughed at and scorned by turns, and the pale sufferer who is waiting for death under a roof of charity—the wanderer forcibly brought to rest—there is a great distance. The boy from the burning West, whose hot blood has flamed out thus early, has stood

alone through life, a gallant vagabond. And he is cheerful to the close!

He died as he wished to die—in the broad sunlight, with friends around him.

He had prepared himself for the long journey. He took with him for provision a conscience pure from cowardice or treachery. However, in spite of that, wishing to gird himself before his departure, he asked to be left alone for a moment. He was obeyed.

When his friends re-entered the room, Privat had turned on his side, and——he had lived.

It was the 18th of July, 1859!

So passed away this Bohemian *par excellence*, who had managed to occupy perhaps more than his deserved share of public attention for many years. He was, however, something more than a Bohemian, with a taste for late hours and absinthe, as I shall endeavour to prove.

Privat d'Anglemont, albeit a Bohemian *pur sang*, understood, I think, the Parisian character as developed by high and low, by the

bourgeois of the Faubourg St. Honoré, and the *gandin* of the Chaussée d'Antin, and the *lion* of extravagant tailoring, who airs his toothpick behind a hundred and fifty guinea horse. The vanity, the folly, the wit, and what we should call emphatically, the swagger, of the few hundred men of all ages, who, talking, riding, lounging and eating, drinking and playing between Tortoni's and the Bois de Boulogne, make up the Paris that is written about in *Figaro* and described in the romances of the *Librairie Nouvelle*, or the *Librairie Centrale*, were at the finger ends of the Prince of Bohemians. He understood the light side of his love. It was his belief that Paris was the centre of the civilization of the world; that her example was taken blindfold in all things, and that unfortunate folks born beyond the frontiers of France could resign themselves to their disgrace only by dint of copying with a slavish earnestness the manners and the *mise* of incomparable Lutetia. Her follies, to him, were worth all the greatnesses of London, Vienna, Berlin, and

St. Petersburg. Her ever-changing *argot;* the rise and fall of her *lions*, who spent their fortunes in two years, not in extravagances natural to youth, but in prodigious follies, for the sole delight of being the wonder of the Boulevards for two seasons; her sensations and manias were the atmosphere in which Privat lived and died; a Bohemian of the Quartier Latin, or of the Café Leblond—a universal, most pliable vagabond!

Poor Privat's contributions to the *Siècle* were spirited reflections of his hasty and errandless career. He tasted the sweets of Paris life, and ground his teeth against its sharp necessities, and laughed all the time, as became a child of Paris, who, by the way, was, as I have shown, a child of Sainte-Rose in the Antilles! His genius and his tastes were Parisian, however. His soul was on the Boulevards or by the Luxembourg. It was his delight to carry the last Paris slang word, or impertinence, or extravagance about, and bandy it lightly as the wash-leather balls are buffetted under the Tuileries chesnuts. He

was of the joyous band who are the delight of romance-writers, and the despair of fathers and uncles. *Ce que c'est que la jeunesse!* the old gentlemen cry, sitting in the straight-laced, severe *café*, under the Palais Royal, whence Camille Desmoulins issued to address the angry mob, and inaugurate the Revolution. *Jeunesse*, it must be confessed, has gone a little mad in Paris. *Jeunesse* reads Dumas the Younger, and *Figaro*, and the "Yellow Dwarf," and is pleased to glance at the free-and-easy morals pictorially developed in the *Journal Amusant*. A very serious gentleman of the old school, who has passed his life doing solid work; a well-informed, high-minded, but not brilliant man, who loves the classics of his country, and has made some sacrifices in an endeavour to spread the knowledge of them among his countrymen, said to me, "It is frightful to contemplate this *jeunesse* of ours: smoking at the cafés; supping at the *Maison Dorée;* driving about the Bois de Boulogne; chaffing, and snapping jewelled fingers at every honourable relation

of life; ignorant as a *chiffonnier*—with Shame in an Indian shawl, on its arm. I look at the noisy, gaudy crowds, laughing along the asphaltum, and wonder what the next generation will be. What can it be?"

That which is new in Paris is *Le Sport*. They caricatured us once: and we have retaliated on the French "*gentleman rider*." It is not the sport of the field which is new: the healthy morning on the breezy moor, the manly stride after the deer; no, the sport that is added to the other vices of the Boulevards is the low gambling over horse-flesh which has long been seen at the public-house doors of England. *Jeunesse*, not having vices enough, has taken to betting. The *lions* have taken to keeping studs. The Duc de Morny counted his seventy racers and his English trainer ten years ago. Whither the Caderousses lead, the little *employés* of the Admiralty or War Office must follow. They who cannot drive in a tandem, follow in a *coupé;* but all go the same route. "We are a race of monkeys," said lively Privat; "we

cannot be ourselves; we must imitate our neighbours of the north or of the south, or we must imitate one another." Here follows a bit of profound observation: "Abroad, in England, for instance, a man is esteemed according to his character as a *humorist*, that is, according to his dissimilarity from his companions!" The *mode* is not so easily set in London as it is in Paris; but we are not so completely *humorists* as the French Bohemian paints us. Sport, in other words betting, and an affected knowledge of horses, is, however, thoroughly established on the Boulevards. The head goose has turned his empty head towards the racecourse, and the flock is following. The *gentlemen riders* are permanent figures in the Paris gallery of exquisites. The fop is learning to make his book. International betting has been fairly set on foot; and the Duc de Morny declared years ago he would not be content until he had won a Derby. The betters of Paris have their regularly appointed agents at our English races. The great betters will have their

humble imitators; and now the day is not far distant when the wine-shops will be the head-quarters of sweepstakes. The sporting is decidedly the new aspect of Paris. The race of horses will improve, and the human race will deteriorate. The profligate of Tortoni's, and of the Jockey Club at the corner of the Rue Scribe, has added the odour of the stable to his attractions.

With this new incense about him, let me present the young man of fast Paris life (and there is little save fast life here) as painted by Privat d'Anglemont, who knew him well. I have taken up dozens of books that have appeared lately, and all of them tend to prove that Privat's canvas is not overcharged with colour. One reads one yellow volume after the other, only to be astonished again and again at the people and things set coolly before the reader for his amusement. Virtue, it would appear, has found a hiding-place at last; and, at two o'clock in the morning, the reckless exquisites in the company of *ces dames* are wishing her *bon voyage!* Privat

writes of his beloved Paris: "At the present day people still like to be thought aristocratic, but they much prefer being considered rich. The love of money has destroyed in us all noble ambition; there are only a few madmen who now care to earn a reputation for the love of glory, and they are the mark for the ridicule of all their contemporaries. It is considered absurd to do anything for the sake of honour; honour neither gives us good dinners, good clothes, nor cheap pleasures, nor does it help to keep up appearances. 'To keep up appearances' is the idea of the epoch. You may be a fool, a scoundrel, a wretch without house or home; you may do what you like, steal, murder; what matter? You will still be clever, rich, honest, magnanimous, if you know how to keep up appearances.

"In France, the greatest evil that can befall a man is to be original. Originality almost amounts to insult. The original man has no chance. Endeavour to get a place for him, and the person to whom you apply

will answer, 'I should be delighted to do any service for you within my power. Command me in all things, but don't ask me to help this friend of yours. Why, my dear fellow, he is an *original!*'

"Young gentleman, who aspire to the honour of sitting eight hours a day at an office desk copying letters, and making reports under the eye of an insolent head clerk —if you wish to attain the object of your ambition, station yourself every day at the window, watch every one who passes, notice their dress, their gesture; study people's way of speaking, borrow their favourite expressions, disguise your own tastes, check your imagination, become a mediocrity, and you will at once assure your future position: you will have preserved appearances.

"Look around; is it possible to meet with originality? Every one has the same walk, the same clothes, the same *tournure*—the tailor makes every man alike: why should you be different from your neighbour? All the world is agreed that France is the land

of good taste; that our women and our dandies are perfect in the art of dress. But from whom does taste emanate, since those who possess leisure and fortune enough to follow the fashion all dress alike? This year blue is the fashionable colour: all the world is in blue. Coats are worn short: coats are curtailed as if by enchantment.

"Next year green will be worn; the waist may be unnaturally long, but the majority of Frenchmen will clothe themselves in green, with long waists, utterly regardless as to whether the costume suits—without judgment or reflection. It is the fashion; that is sufficient. It was but last year that the Boulevard was changed into a Hospital for Incurables. A few lively persons, wishing to play the Parisians a practical joke, made their appearance one fine day on the Boulevards dressed in redingotes borrowed from the wardrobe of Bicêtre. They became at once the fashion, and all the tailors were obliged to apply to the clothmakers of the *Assistance Publique* in order to procure the

particular kind of cloth required to satisfy the singular taste of these customers.

"It was difficult to say whom this kind of garment became; certainly neither the short and fat, nor the tall and thin. In any case it was hideous; yet everybody aspiring to belong to the aristocracy of taste, was *embicêtré* by this spirit of imitation. It is therefore understood that if you wish to be neither a fool, nor a wit, nor a very young man, nor an original—any of these titles shutting the door in the face of all careers,—if you would neither think, nor judge, nor reason, nor invent, nor live for yourself: do as the world does; accept the slavery; bow your head to the tyranny, and all will be at once open to you—you will have kept up appearances. In France no one makes a fortune in order to live in ease and comfort, and indulge in tranquil joys,—money is made for the purpose of emulating some other envied person, and to have the appearance of a man who knows how to enjoy his wealth. There is very little reality in this beyond the appearance; the

proof is that nearly all rich people are ridiculous and suffer from *ennui.*"

Privat was a good-natured critic, when compared with some of his contemporaries. Let us hope that the rising generation are not so bad as they are painted: and that they can read better things than were to be found in the *Hanneton!* It was openly sold everywhere. It was read in public—and I cannot even describe the grossness of its contents. Yet no voice was raised against it. The public was not scandalized. The censor of the press had nothing to say. He cared not what form vanity took, provided it was not that of a politician. He was possibly pleased to see *messieurs les journalistes* airing themselves in the little Boulevards' papers—and content, if talked about.

Every body is panting to be before the world—to be *en évidence*, even for their follies or their vices, or both. Private life is invaded by the critic or *chroniqueur* without the least hesitation. Eugène Delacroix was turned to account by the gossip-mongers, before his

body was laid in the earth. We had a description of his house, of his manner of living, and of his death and appearance after death. His last words made copy in the *Figaro!* We are told that his furniture was in the style of the First Empire; and that his home had a severe aspect. His dying words were a request that his eyes might be closed directly after death. He ordered his body to be embalmed. Had the writer known who was the painter's barber, and how many francs were in the artist's house when he breathed his last, the facts would have been served up for the Boulevard *cafés*.

Here, however, is a point worth keeping. Delacroix exhibited a picture in 1831, entitled 'Liberty guiding the People on the Barricades.' It was at once bought by the Government, and thrust into the lumber-room of the Louvre, where it has remained to this day. Will the present Government of France disentomb it? This was a subject of great regret to him, and cured him of politics with the brush.

But the *chroniqueur*, mayhap, is not to blame—when he gathers materials at random, at a man's dinner-table, or by his death-bed. He pleases the public; and, so far as we can see, he pleases the people about whom he gossips. Parisian celebrities are not loth to sit for their portraits in any attitude, provided the portraits are seen. I take up a light paper, intended to be read over a Neapolitan ice, and I am informed that Monselet, Jules Janin, Leo Lespès, and other literary celebrities are *beaux mangeurs!* Hervé also is said to have a very pretty *coup de fourchette.* The author follows up his relations with an exclamation that it was always so, with literary men; as though *suprêmes* were always at the command of authors; and *cordons bleus* were ever the humble servants of the poet!

To return to poor Privat. He wrote, I must confess, occasionally, with small regard to the *bienséances.* His famous History of a Shirt was, I believe, considered too "strong" even to be read in wine-shops, in the columns of the *Siècle;* and was published after his

death. It has a Rabelaisian humour and richness in it. Privat could be serious as well as gay. The author of Monsieur Poupard could write a grave review of the Abbé Mullois' "Manual of Charity." He had depth and earnestness in him; but, as Jean Paul put it, "he laid the egg of his act, or deep saying, without any nest, on the naked rock."

CHAPTER XI.

LITERARY VIVISECTION.

IF a law should issue prohibiting every French writer from peeping into the study, the wardrobe, the *café*, and the accounts of his fellow-men of letters, there would be consternation on the Boulevards, from the Chaussée d'Antin to Vachette's. Dinochau's turbulent patrons would turn white with rage; the *Académie* in the Rue St. Jacques would be in despair; and the more elegant frequenters of the Divan Lepelletier would bite their nails, and cry that at last Liberty was stifled and would rise no more. What would become of the *Figaro ?*—the *Journal Amusant* would

cease to be amusing,—the *Hanneton* would fly away. The unhappy Parisians would be left uninformed as to the manner in which Alexandre Dumas spent his last Napoléon; and when he was likely to borrow once more. Poor Dumas! A long life in a glass house has given his countrymen an opportunity of knowing him by heart from head to foot. He has supplied material to every scandalous pen. His debts and duns; his little private vanities; his *tendresses* and his quarrels; his family relations and his transactions with his publishers are known to every lounger on the Boulevards. A steady reader of the current literature of the time might make out Dumas' accounts for him, and tell him when he last paid his tailor's bill. He has grown fat: *this* is a matter of contemporary history already. Dumas was at his wit's end for money when he started *Les Mousquetaires;* and he paid nobody—not even his authors. But Dumas is only described every day because he is more celebrated than his companions. He was once, I believe, on view every afternoon from four

till five, at the office of the *Petit Journal*, where he was free to converse with any of the subscribers to the newspaper.

Murger, Privat d'Anglemont, Guichardet, De Musset, and a crowd less celebrated, but still known enough to serve the turn of the insatiable *chroniqueur* from time to time, have been served up in every journal, and with all the sauces of the French literary *cuisine*. A man shall be perpetual secretary to the Institute of France, and he shall not escape censure. We are in the heyday of the Second Empire. Men of science, sculptors, historians may live out of the world, but not out of a *chronique*. Alphonse Karr is followed to the Villa Bermond, near Nice—whither we, indeed, shall follow him presently. The *chroniqueur* will take an observant fork, and note all that is upon M. Karr's table. Ah! M. Karr thought he would eat that *Mayonnaise* unknown to the world! He reckoned without his *chroniqueur!* Paris knows which claw of the lobster he consumed. M. Karr must not complain, however; since the *chroniqueur*

considers the shoulders of a lady at the opera fair field for his criticism. A private rehearsal of an opera is announced, the *chroniqueur* is admitted, and the world is informed that the Prince and Princess de Metternich were there, with Count Walewski and the Countess de Labédoyère. *Chroniqueur* Mané then respects the privacy of the rehearsal in these words: "Above were Madame Aguado and her sons; on the other side was the Count Baciocchi. The elegant clubs had each its box, as on subscription nights. The Marquis du Hallay was not to be prevented from having his. Madame Lelion was in a box on the right of the audience. In the next box was her daughter, with her pretty light ringlets: the young Princess Poniatowska, the daughter-in-law of the author of the music. Then there was the pretty Marchioness of Casanova, who is not, however, quite so pretty as people hoped she would be at the beginning of the winter. Opposite, on the first tier, are M. Fould and his family. Not far off was the Marchioness of Las Marismas. Almost at her

side, one of M. Baroche's sons." Manè concludes by describing M. de Saint-Georges, one of the authors of the *libretto*, as applauding his own work with "juvenile ardour."

The writer is on his best behaviour when he has to touch ministers or their belongings. He pays compliments, he reports feminine charms, and he informs his readers that ladies who pretend to be *à la mode* are displeased when he passes their white shoulders or golden ringlets in silence. Civil to these great folk, he makes his fun out of his own brothers. He is never weary of telling his readers M. de Mirecourt's name is simply Jacquot. Grandguillot has supplied innumerable tasteless jests. No better specimen of literary vivisection occurs to me than a passage from Aurelien Scholl's "Scènes et Mensonges Parisiens." The scene is the Divan Lepelletier. M. Scholl lays bare his literary brothers:—

"It is eight o'clock; the dominoes are ranged in battle order; the Baron de Gyvés has challenged Busquet. Fages, the former manager of the old *Mousquetaire*, regards the

combatants with an envious eye; he burns to enter into the lists, and to be matched with an adversary worthy of him. A message is received from M. Félix Mornand, who, called upon to fulfil other duties, sends in his resignation as *dominotier*. Another loss for the Divan! Arnould Frémy, the Labourdonnais of the double-blank, in a few feeling words expresses his regret at the daily and deplorable decline in the number of *dominotiers*. Busquet throws himself into the arms of Fages, and drops a tear. Fages wipes his waistcoat and asks if it will stain! The billiard-table is occupied by the Marquis de Belloy and André de Goy. The author of the *Tasse à Sorrente* is fond of the translator of Dickens, because their names rhyme. Noise behind the scenes, chairs upset, oaths of the *garçons*, Armand Barthet enters. *Mistron*, gentlemen! at the magic word, twenty persons rise. Vernet, with one bound, jumps over M. Eugène Forcade. Every one rushes to the little *salon* at the left. They take their places; the cards are dealt.

'Les mistroneurs, les mistroneurs,
Les mistroneurs sont réunis!'"

The origin of *mistron* is lost in the darkness of time; but it is a kind of *trente-et-un*, which greatly helps to lead poets to the workhouse. The *mistroneurs*, under the direction of Armand Barthet, have taken possession of the left wing of the Divan. Edmond Texier has in vain tried to replace the constitutional *mistron* by the absolute whist; Julien Lemer alone responded to the appeal, and the *mistroneurs* are still in force. The wall of the left side of the Divan was embellished, the other day, by a variety of inscriptions of the following kind.

In one corner:—

"Quand Paul Féval
Est à cheval,
On voit Banville
Courir la ville
Et Paul Foucher
Va se coucher."

Further on:—

"L'encrier, la plume et l'épée,
Étaient les amis de Pompée."

Then the epitaph on the brothers Goncourt as one individual:—

"Edmond et Jules dort ici,
Le caveau froid est sa demeure ;
Tous deux est mort à la même heure,
Sa plume est enterrée aussi.
Le trépas est comme une trappe
Qui s'ouvre et ferme tour à tour.
Bien vite, hélas ! il nous attrappe,
Quand le cruel sur ses gonds court!"

More verses follow; then proverbs, jokes, &c.; at last some lines by Guichardet, which have brought grey hairs to the head of Expilly:—

"Expilly
A failli
Vendre un livre.
Il n'a tenu qu'à Lévy,
Que cet auteur inouï
Ait gagné de quoi vivre !"

Expilly is an upright man, both morally and physically. He is Marseillais, like the Canebière, and has preserved enough of his native accent to serve him for a certificate of birth. Before enrolling himself in the great

literary battalion, Expilly served in the Lancers; he may occasionally be seen, even now, practising his drill in the glass. Disgusted at last with Parisian life, Expilly went to try and tempt Fortune in Brazil. Fortune, however, did not yield, and at present Expilly is writing Brazilian novels, which are very curious and very popular. It is said that he has had the left-hand salon of the Divan re-papered at his own expense. *Mistron* still counts him amongst its slaves. Charles Emmanuel is the man who has revolutionized astronomy, and set the planets in a new light. His stature is that of a man, if seen through an ordinary telescope. He has put an ivory knob to the end of his pencil, that is his cane. When Emmanuel travels he dresses like a child, and pays half-price. Aimé Millet is a dark sculptor with a cold. "My boy; you must come to the Rue de La Rochefoucauld, and see my exhibition! two busts and an Ariadne."—"Are you pleased with them?" is the reply.—"Delighted. That fellow of mine really appears to be living; he absolutely seems

to look at you and to hear what you say. One is tempted to offer him a cigar."—"And Ariadne?"—"Oh! one would like to marry her, simply. But come and see." I did go the next day, O beloved Millet! and think you too modest. I demand Ariadne of you; I offer my hand and fortune, and I know I shall make her happy. When you perceive at night a red light in the street advancing towards you, you at once divine an omnibus, and get out of the way accordingly; but look well before you, for if the light is long instead of round, and rather violet in colour, you must, on the contrary, advance to meet it. It will be the nose of Guichardet, the nose of the last gentleman! Who is Guichardet? An infinite being, whom our pen fails to describe; the friend of Alfred de Musset, the friend of Gérard de Nerval. Literary men call him "Uncle;" women know him as "Oscar." Where is Guichardet? Every where: in Heaven, in Hell, at the Divan, at the Brasserie, at the Halle, and all over the world. Guichardet does not write, he relates, and they

write for him. Guichardet may live to be a hundred—he will never be old.

A few more of the great obscure are added to the gallery, and then we are told that they return home half an hour after midnight, to dream of the ace and of the double-six. In this way most of our men of letters spend their evenings. A first night at one of the theatres will hardly draw them out of their shell. M. Scholl is amusing—with his knife. He must be a bold man who starts a literary journal under the eyes of Paris *chroniqueurs*:—

"The Count de Villedeuil was scarcely twenty-two when he allotted to himself the title of editor. His income was between three and four thousand a year, with an uncle into the bargain. One must surely compassionate an existence so thrown away, an ambition so mistaken. With just enough intellect to grasp at every thing, and not enough to conquer any thing, the Count was born a gentleman, and was the grandson of a minister of a day. Fortune had been prodigal to him, yet the indulgence in wild follies, unfortunate

speculations, and scandalous actions-at-law, has left him nothing of his former splendour but the family tomb in Père-la-Chaise, which is inalienble. It is the punishment of Tantalus. To go from one usurer to the other,—to sell, one by one, his woods and his château, and to have nothing left to him but a palace—for his corpse! Although Villedeuil was but twenty-two when I first saw him, he appeared quite thirty. His long black beard, his indolent and disdainful expression, his carelessly aristocratic manners, were very imposing at first; but it was easy to be seen that he was less at his ease than his visitors, and after hearing him speak, one was inclined to set him down as a child. Villedeuil's dream was to rule Paris; he must do something of every thing. He was a shareholder to a large amount in the Théâtre Lyrique; but he aspired to the direction of the Opéra. He wished to buy the *Journal des Débats*. People must talk of him; he must make a noise at any price. Corrupted by this unhealthy age, Villedeuil was wanting neither in intelligence nor talent;

but both were utterly destroyed by vanity. The desire of seeing himself in print, and the wish of putting himself forward, made him sign his name to every little thing he wrote, and even to many little things that other people wrote, since he was openly accused of plagiarism by M. Talbot, Professor of the College of Nantes. On the cover of one of his books was the announcement of 'A new work by M. le Comte Villedeuil, this man of the world who might be taken for a Benedictine monk.' This was the prodigy, the well of science, the man *à la mode*, the nabob, the Louis the Fourteenth! His study was hung with black, decorated with silver daggers; his *calèche* was orange colour; every where luxury and bad taste. His desire was always to astonish; but he scarcely ever gained more than a shrug of the shoulders. MM. Alphonse Karr and De Goncourt having on one occasion been summoned for some infraction of the Press Laws, Villedeuil accompanied them to the *Palais de Justice*. When the usher of the court asked him for his papers, in order

that he might be admitted into the proper part of the court, Villedeuil answered angrily, 'I have not been summoned, but I am the guilty person; I am the manager of the paper.' What injustice! he was miserable at the idea that *he* had not been summoned instead. The office of the *Paris* was at the Maison Dorée! Where can one be better than in the bosom of one's family? The contributors to the *Paris* went from the Maison Dorée to Anteuil, where the manager had a country house, and gave a great many dinners during the summer. At dessert, the guests generally became affectionate; they made a great many protestations, and were very polite; and Roger de Beauvoir, always agreeable and never behindhand, invited everybody to dinner on fantastic Wednesdays."

But, I must turn from ordinary samples of literary vivisection to draw attention to the latest specimen of the art. The knife is held by the famous M. Nadar; and his subject is the well-known Abbé Moigno. I confess that I look at M. Nadar's knife with considerable

indifference; and that I do not shudder when the Abbé shrieks. People who know much about the sometime editor of "*Cosmos*" laugh the loudest.

Nadar issued the first number of an illustrated journal, with the title of *L'Aéronaute*. The *feuilleton* of No. 1 is devoted to a portrait of the critical Abbé, who has been so long in the wake of Paris inventors. The Abbé has fallen foul of the wrathful Nadar, for reasons which appear to be plain, at any rate to the subject of the reverend gentleman's attack. The Abbé's cloth has long given him an impunity of which he has not been slow to avail himself. But his hour has come at last. M. Nadar announces his portrait, and warns him that his *soutane* shall no longer protect him. "You took it off to hit me; well, you shall not put it on again till I have had my blow at you." Nadar owns that he is delighted with the opportunity the malevolent Abbé has given him, of having a warm discussion on "aërial automotion." He promises to worry the reverend critic for some time to

come. He will cut him to pieces, carefully. And then, I must confess, Nadar with sharpest satire bites in the portrait of his unhandsome opponent. The Abbé's nose is called "roxalanesque." He is described as negligent in his dress; "although," the dissector adds, "people say he makes plenty of money." M. Nadar looks in vain for the saintly side of the Abbé. His tonsure is hidden under a cocked hat. He is a *Lansquenet*—not a priest. "A rough man, this Captain Moigno!" Other people respect the cloth he will persist in putting over his body; but M. Nadar promises that he will drive his teeth through it—and when his teeth meet, he is not easily shaken off. "You shall not see my heels, Abbé!" M. Nadar shouts. The first sitting over the Abbé is not promising for the future repose of the reverend critic. M. Nadar is only fighting with the common weapon. I know the *café* to which M. Nadar repairs, and what he says there. I have paid to have his private history and personal appearance presented to me. He winced, I doubt not,

while he was being cut at; but I have my three francs' worth of his flesh. He must submit to the common lot. There is nothing private in Paris. A gentleman who goes to an evening party, turns his friends into "copy." A private performance! Such an idea is monstrous. Everybody must and does hear every thing. I could as easily realize to my mind the private performance of a gale of wind, as a private rehearsal within the fortifications of Paris.

The indefatigable *chroniqueurs* and *chroniqueuses* of Paris fresh nib their pens for the winter campaign. The civilized part of Paris is returning since the pretty Countess de B—— and the graceful Marquise de C—— were seen at the Italian Opera a few nights ago. *Chroniqueur* is at his ease. The shoulders and eyes of the ladies in the boxes are as open to his criticism as the *soprani* on the stage. He will let the Countess know whether he approves of her bonnet; and woe unto the Marquise should she show an inharmonious combination of colours in

her toilette! He has used up his friends in the dull season, and now comes the turn of the great world. Not a *café* nor a *restaurant* has escaped him. It is well known to *café* frequenters that the number of pieces of sugar which belong to every cup of coffee is, and long has been, fixed at six. Some audacious proprietors have, from time to time, given seven lumps to attract custom, but the traditional number holds its ground. Leo Lespès, at his wit's end for materials, has dwelt on this custom, and on the effect of the sugar-breaking machine; but there is little or no "meat" left on the *cafés*. The *café* literature of Paris would fill a large bookcase. The bone has been licked by the author of "The Threshold of Tortoni." We know that Mirès' breakfast was served to him at the Café Anglais in five minutes, and that Dr. Véron could not acclimatize himself to this side of the Boulevards on the abolition of the Café de Paris. Paris has become familiar with the whereabouts in the Café Riche of the literary suppers of which Henri

Murger was the dominant star. When M. Ratazzi was in Paris, it was his wont to take the iced coffee, for which M. Bouin, of the Café Cardinal, is renowned. Little did the distinguished Italian know that the eye of the Paris *chroniqueur* was upon him. He was much mistaken if he imagined that he could enjoy a mouthful that would not afford "copy" to the pens of the "gallant allies" of his country. When Albéric Second had his letters addressed to this same *café*, he was providing food for a literary brother; and so was Louis Lurine, when he wrote his numerous articles here. I say the last piece of meat must be torn from the *cafés*, since the *chroniqueur* is now compelled to tell us where he writes about them. Does the reader desire to know where the pretty Countess and graceful Marquise are undergoing the analytical process, for appearance in print? Let him hie to the Café Grosse Tête, opposite the Cardinal,—and there, between six and seven o'clock in the evening, he will find, on the ground floor, the *chroniqueurs*' table! Around

it are grouped Xavier Aubryet, who writes about other people's business for the *presse*, Gustave Claudin of the *Moniteur*, Aurélien Scholl, who is charmingly indiscreet in the *Yellow Dwarf*, and, I believe, so long as he could limp about, poor Jules Lecomte. All the *café* world has passed through the hands of these gentlemen, from the wood-merchant taking his *absinthe* at the Café de la Bastille, to the dandy pecking at his grilled turkey-wing in the Café de la Madeleine.

CHAPTER XII.

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE IN PARIS.

THE "divine Williams!" He has become a presence in Paris, albeit it is difficult very often to recognize the inspired English yeoman in his fantastic French costume. The tercentenary of his birth gave occasion to those very self-sufficient and audacious gentlemen—the *chroniqueur* of Paris—for the display of their little wit, often at the expense of the first of all wits. These gentlemen approach the subject of Shakspere scantily provided with reverence. They are so many infinitely small Voltaires, bound to fill a given number of columns with saucy things,

once or twice a week. Shakspere, to them is an open subject, like the genius of young Dumas. He who can write amusing prattle about *L'Ami des Femmes*, can cut his joke out of Hamlet. There are Shaksperians by the hundred to be found in Paris, who pass with scorn the activities of these literary wasps, and make willing homage to the Bard of Avon, as the Master Poet of the World. Some of these French Shaksperians have laboured hard to keep the rugged strength of Shakspere's English in a French translation of it. He has learned critics and commentators, and accomplished interpreters of him on the stage. There may be many who love him "not wisely," but it is pleasant to be able to record that the lovers of his genius are increasing marvellously on the banks of the Seine. When the *chroniqueurs* tell us that it is the fashion to affect a knowledge of Shakspere, and that hundreds of young sparks pretend to be on the most intimate terms with the "divine Williams," when, in truth, they are hardly on bowing terms, let

us accept this affectation as one that is full of promise for the future. The sons, we trust, will have the knowledge their fathers affect.

Now, our English Shakspere commentators and inquirers are, it must be confessed, a timid race, when put in comparison with some French Shaksperian writers. The English make conjectures; but their bolder neighbours create facts. Your nervous biographer surmises that Shakspere may have helped his father in the killing of cattle; and speculates, from the great dramatist's law allusions, on the probability of his having been articled to an attorney.

But see how much more satisfactory the picture is, how much bolder and firmer the lines are, when the mighty author of Monte Christo takes up the pencil. It is a matter of current Paris history, that the illustrious Alexandre writes in his shirt sleeves. He occasionally conveys to us a notion that for passages of extra energy, he tucks the shirt sleeves up. Employed some years ago (in

anticipation of a Tercentenary Banquet, projected among French authors) to give the Parisians a graphic sketch of the life of "our pleasant Willy," he set to work in his firmest manner, calling his sketch "The Anniversary of Williams Shakspere." Having informed his readers that Williams was born on the 23rd of April, 1564, he reminds them that the world had then been without a dramatic author for two thousand and sixty-six years; in other words, since Euripides ceased to write. And then, he falls to, boldly, with his brush. He deals confidently with the Stratford butcher-boy, and promotes him easily to the rank of attorney's clerk. We are given to understand that Shakspere made but an indifferent clerk, and that his employers advised him to run away to London after the awkward poaching affair, for which he might have been hanged, or sent to the galleys. And so Shakspere, impelled by a love of liberty and domestic discord, stepped forth on his way to the modern Babylon.

It is due to English readers, who love their

Shakspere, that M. Dumas' important revelations concerning the great poet should be frankly and freely communicated to them. See the new facts that crowd the Shaksperian page of the immortal Alexandre of Paris. English biographers of the bard wax poor and pale with their shabby supply of facts. It may be that their renown will be revived—

"When every feather sticks in his own wing."

For the present, how can we resist the bold picturesqueness of Dumas' Shakspere in his boyhood?

"No events of importance occurred in the youth of Shakspere, like those which distinguish the early years of those who are destined to become great. A butcher's boy in his father's shop, young Williams was in the habit of bleeding calves and sheep. They who manufacture false poetry about the cradles of great men, say, that, after the manner of the priests of old (with whom they desire to liken him), young Shakspere spoke invocations before he bled his calves and

sheep; but in order to do this, a certain knowledge of antiquity, of Homer, above all, was necessary. Whereas neither Homer, nor Eschylus, nor Sophocles, nor Euripides, nor Aristophanes, nor Plautus, nor Virgil, nor Tacitus, nor Juvenal were translated. The only authors he could have known were Herodotus, translated in 1554, Thucydides in 1550, Polybius in 1568, Diodorus of Sicily in 1569, Appian in 1578, and, finally, Plutarch, who was translated, not from the original, but from Amyot's translation. It is true that to these authors already known, we must join Sallust, Cæsar, &c. We do not know that Shakspere had studied any of these books, except Plutarch, from whom he borrowed three of his masterpieces; Cæsar, Coriolanus, and Antony and Cleopatra. Young Williams was sent to the free-school, where he received a fair education—but we have already seen to what this education led—it led the future author of Othello and Macbeth to the position of a butcher's boy. His father did not see clearly how his son could succeed

in his own business; so he presently articled him as clerk to an attorney. But young Williams did not take kindly to stamped paper—we presume that stamps were invented at the time. He retained, from his original trade of butcher, a taste for sporting; and when he was not at his master's office, he was with hawks and dogs. Old John Shakspere, seeing his son's sporting propensities, thought that if he had a home of his own he would abandon hawks and dogs, and take to the duties of bringing up a family. Consequently, probably abusing his paternal authority, he married the lad, at the age of seventeen, to Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a small farmer in the neighbourhood, and who was seven years older than her bridegroom. The union was not a happy one, although its first-fruits were twins—Amlett and Judith—who are inscribed in the parish books of Stratford-upon-Avon, on the 2nd of February, 1584. The young husband, it will be seen, was not twenty. Now this inscription settles a literary question. The

name of Amlett, given to the male of the twins, was not common enough in England to allow us to believe that accident gave it to the new-born babe. No; this name shows us that Williams Shakspere had probably in his head the idea, if not the plan, of his first Hamlet; for it is known now, thanks to the fine work of François Hugo on Shakspere, that there were two Hamlets—the first, which was played towards the end of 1584, or at the beginning of 1585, and the other about 1589.

"Now, how did the idea of this piece, which was one of Shakspere's masterpieces, and which will be eternally the masterpiece of the modern stage, come to the young Williams in the midst of his studies with his attorney, and of his aspirations for sport? In England in 1580, when Shakspere was sixteen, at the period when the feudal laws of the middle ages were hardly abolished, the son of a poor butcher could not be a sportsman—he could be only a poacher. Williams Shakspere was, then, a mere poacher. In his poaching expe-

ditions our young poet was compelled to lie for hours together upon his stomach, or perched up a tree, or lost, like the Pretender, among the branches of an oak. He who writes these lines, if he has not become a poet of Shakspere's proportions, does not hesitate to affirm that to whatever degree the author of Hamlet nurtured his love of the chase, he, the author of Henri III., has loved it as devotedly. He knows, then, by experience, what are the dreams of a poet who is waiting for a buck or a boar on a fine May or September night, lying flat upon his stomach in the high grass, or perched in the branches of an oak; and to what ideal heights, solitude, darkness, the rustling of the leaves, and the thousand whisperings of the night, can carry the imagination of a dreamer."

The author of Hamlet and the author of Henri III. are presented to us, by the condescension of the latter, arm-in-arm!

Well, Shakspere arrived in London, found Burbage; held horses outside the theatre, and was presently promoted to the dignities

and emoluments of candle-snuffer within the theatre. The poor fellow, who agreed to snuff the candles, soon requested an interview with Burbage. This being granted, the trembling underling pulled a manuscript out of his pocket, and read the first scenes of Hamlet to the manager; at the same time Williams requested and obtained the favour of being permitted to play the Ghost. Hamlet produced an immense sensation in London. M. Alexandre Dumas declines to believe that during the five or six years following the production of Hamlet, Shakspere did nothing more than retouch and perfect it. "A man is not content to rest," says the immortal Alexandre, "after a success like that." M. Dumas forgets that it is not given to every man to be able to take his coat off, and cover endless rouleaux with writing. According to Shakspere's new biographer, the poet's life was one uninterrupted series of disappointments; we English in our pride have endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to describe his earthly pilgrimage as an incessant progress of triumph to the

Capitol. Our love of royalty, it appears, has led us to pretend most unwarrantably, that Shakspere was kindly protected by Queen Elizabeth. The poet praised the virgin queen, who never had any but a deaf ear for him. He died poor, deserted, and despised.

"Let not England, then," says M. Dumas, "ungrateful *par excellence*, boast of having had that pride in her great men which so many nations, particularly the French, have been accused of lacking. England, for two centuries, forgot the name of her greatest poet; of one of the three men who, with Homer and Dante, are the glory of humanity: she allowed the mulberry tree which he planted to droop, and the house in which he died to tumble: and if she has preserved the house in which he was born, it is because it was too humble to be the object of speculation.

"As to France, she does not forget, she is contented to misunderstand Shakspere. Corneille, Rotron, Molière, Racine, his contemporaries, completely ignored him; and sought their inspiration from Greece, Rome,

or Spain. Voltaire, after a visit to England, during which he learned the language, was the first to read Shakspere: he brought with him from London, Semiramis copied from Hamlet, and Orosmane, an imitation of Othello. How did the plagiarist afterwards express his gratitude to him whom he had robbed and pillaged? He called him a drunken clown; a dung-heap in which you might by chance find a pearl. He finally calls him Gilles Shakspere, instead of Will. Shakspere.

"The great actor Garrick, searching amongst the *detritus* of ages, discovered therein Shakspere; and like the Roman labourers Virgil speaks of, astonished at the size of the skeleton, he measured the bones, and, thanks be to him, placed the giant not only on his pedestal, but on his feet, to astonish the world, and frighten contemporary authors.

"Since then the name of Shakspere has grown in England, France, Germany, and even in Italy, the country least sympathetic, and whose language is most antagonistic to

his genius. The anniversary of his birth has become, like that of Jesus and Mahomet, a new era, that of art; and as Christians date from the year of Christ, and Mahometans from the year of Hegira, so there will come a time when dramatic authors, leaving the ancient world to Eschylus and Sophocles, will date the modern one from the YEAR of SHAKSPERE, that is to say from 1564, the year which had the honour of giving birth to the man who, after God, has been the most prolific creator."

This is what is called strong writing in M. Dumas' most popular manner. Having completed the poet's life, the tercentenary anniversary of his birth is approached with a loud braying of trumpets. This is a great century in which we live. It has produced Napoleon, Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël, Victor Hugo, steam, the electric telegraph, and rifled cannon. But it is great also because it is an era of justice and of appreciation. This century has placed a wreath on every glorious head. France, of course, has had a

very great share in this noble work; she has not only classed and rewarded her own great men with generous impartiality, but she has sent inquiries into foreign lands, provided with patents for posterity, and charged with the duty of finding out foreign greatness; old prejudices have been wiped away to make a place for Nelson near Jean Bart, for Byron near Lamartine, for Göethe near Hugo, for Humboldt near Cuvier, for Walter Scott near Molière, for Alfieri near Casimir de la Vigne, for Macaulay near Michelet, for Dickens near Madame Sand. Shakspere must go with the emperors—with Napoleon the emperor of the political world. Shakspere is related to Homer and to Dante, as Napoleon is related to Charlemagne and to Cæsar. The echoes of the hymns of praise lately sung by Germany at the tomb of Schiller, called to the memory of Englishmen that they also had a forgotten tomb; and forthwith colossal manifestations arose in nearly all the cities of England.

According to our great Alexandre of Paris, the nineteenth century was ashamed of the

opprobrium which the eighteenth had cast upon Shakspere. The year 1864 forgot the year 1815; the free-trade convention covered the treaties of Vienna. Men belonging to all the liberal professions decided that a *fête* in honour of the birthday of Shakspere should be held for the first time in France, a committee was appointed, and then a sub-committee agreed to wait upon three French princes of literature, at their respective hotels. M. Dumas does not leave the world in ignorance of the way in which this sub-committee was received. They went first to M. Villemain, who sent them to M. Guizot. This gentleman would not assist at the French banquet, as he had not assisted at the English banquets. But M. Dumas will not leave the historian without hanging an anecdote upon him. M. Dumas once conducted the celebrated English *tragédienne*, Miss Smithson, into M. Guizot's presence. The lady was nervous because she could not freely speak French; but Dumas re-assured her with the intelligence that M. Guizot was the translator

of Shakspere, and must know English. But when they reached the illustrious gentleman, he at once confessed he did not understand English. From Guizot the sub-committee repaired to the residence of Lamartine. Lamartine, with tears in his eyes, excused himself: he was shrouded under a double mourning.

The trouble of the sub-committee and of the committee-in-chief was thrown away. M. Boittelle, Prefect of Police, whispered a word in the ear of the director of the Grand Hôtel. The banquet was a plot—a pretext for a political demonstration. An empty chair was to be placed at the head of the table for the spirit of Victor Hugo. A *farceur* had declared that the republic was to be proclaimed over the dessert! So neither the banquet in honour of Shakspere nor the Shaksperian dramatic performance would be permitted. The English banquet remained. It had no political complexion whatever. As chairman of the committee, I can vouch for its strictly literary character. It was to

include the British Ambassador and the American Minister. The leading English residents had rallied round Lord Grey. About seventy Shaksperians were mustered for the 23rd. But the English counted without M. Boittelle. On the 20th a commissary of police called on the Grand Hotel manager, and informed him that Lords Cowley and Grey, the American minister, and their friends, would not be permitted to dine together on the three-hundreth anniversary of Shakspere's birth. Yet the *Constitutionnel*—the semi-official journal of the Second Empire—afterwards ventured to assert that the English Shaksperian banquet was not interfered with by the authorities! It becomes interesting to know the reason why we English abandoned our dinner. It was on the 20th, I am able to state most positively, that a police officer called at the Grand Hôtel, and forbade the holding of the banquet. On the following day a remonstrance was addressed to M. Boittelle, who thereupon called on the British ambassador, and said that the British

subjects might dine together, but that there must be no Frenchmen with them. The prefect required a letter, moreover, from Lord Grey, as president of the banquet, in which his lordship should guarantee that the banquet would be purely English. This condition, on which the police prohibition would be withdrawn by the prefect, was communicated to me as Chairman of the Paris Shakspere Committee, at noon, on the 22nd. We had already, immediately on receipt of the police prohibition, informed the English residents that the banquet would not be allowed to take place; and now on the eve of the anniversary we were informed that on receipt of a guarantee of good conduct from their president, the banquet would be permitted to go on. In the list of gentlemen who were to have dined, under the presidency of Lord Grey, the names of some eight or nine Frenchmen were to be found. None of these were political names, and some of them were those of professors of imperialist sympathies. It is almost superfluous, I trust, to add that the English com-

mittee, declining to dine without these gentlemen, declining also to ask Lord Grey to address the required letter to the prefect of police, took no steps whatever to have the police prohibition, which had been left at the Grand Hôtel, removed. The committee broke up at two o'clock on Friday the 22nd. It was afterwards discovered that late in the afternoon of the same day, the hotel manager having been summoned to the prefecture of police, had been informed that the veto laid on the English banquet was withdrawn unconditionally. But the guests had already been dispersed; the invitations had been already withdrawn; the committee had broken up; in short, the ban of the police was taken off the English banquet, when it must have been obvious to the police authorities that it could not take place.

The French Shaksperians, robbed of their banquet, and of the pleasure of seeing Shakspere's Hamlet, as translated by Alexandre Dumas, revenged themselves by giving the widest possible publicity to the address of

M. Victor Hugo that was to have been read over the dinner-table. I am afraid that the sounding phrases in which the sincere Shaksperian Hugo proclaims the cessation of old enmities and rivalries between England and France at the shrine of Shakspere will not find a universal echo for many a year to come.

Eugene Chavette was put forward in the *Figaro*, that appeared on the great anniversary, to set his countrymen right on the merits of Shakspere and the sincerity of his French admirers. He goes boldly to work. He insists that in that hypocritical crowd, where every man shows the white of his eyes at the name of Shakspere, not twenty can speak English.

Twenty!

He is too liberal! According to him, there is only one individual in France who can speak English well, namely, M. Edward of the *Nation*, who translates Miss Braddon's novels at the rate of sixpence per page—M. Bernard Derosne fathering these translations.

But after 1830 people got tired of worshipping Voltaire, and, just at the right moment, appeared a wag who invented Shakspere. Crowds gathered round him, and it was agreed that Shakspere should be admired without being known. The Shaksperian religion was created. Shakspere's French apostles, knowing nothing of their master, were provided with a short stock of nicknames and quotations. They called him familiarly "Old Will," and were bound to repeat "To be, or not to be," as though they were eating honey. I knew a French lady who christened her cat "To be."

"Poor Shakspere!" cries M. Chavette. "He was an honest man (a little cold, perhaps, towards his wife); but, I repeat, an honest man—more poacher than democrat. I am quite certain that if he had thought for one moment we should be pestered with his figure, three hundred years after his death, he would have suppressed eight-tenths of his works. Cannot we do justice to Shakspere without tearing our hair in admiration, at the mere

mention of this writer's name? The passion and the genius that shine, in spite of the total absence of common sense, in the ten admirable pieces arranged by Garrick; should these force us to admit the twenty other absurd pieces, for which it is sought to compel our complete enthusiasm?"

M. Chavette is quite certain that we English are laughing at the fuss that is being made about the bard of Avon—"*ce mauvais petit mort de* 300 *ans*." And Paris Shaksperians are, to the mind of the *Figaro* writer, only so many advertising agents for Victor Hugo's new book! When a certain *chroniqueur* was told that the police had stopped the British banquet, he replied, "All the worse for Shakspere." It was painful, indeed, for an Englishman to skim the Paris journals that appeared on or about the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakspere's birth. One narrow-minded, sour critic rejoiced that the English poet's birth had not been celebrated in France, and suggested that Frenchmen should wait for a centenary of his death, to rejoice! Here

is a distance marked boldly between a Hugo and a Fournier. Take Assolant again; his sneers are more galling than Hugo's misconceptions. M. Hugo is a thinker, a poet, a power. We grieve when he tells the world that England has not been a true lover of the first poet; but we do not despise him for his error. When an Assolant, cased in impenetrable ignorance, talks to Europe of Shakspere, and of us, we are moved to wrath indeed! As when M. Chavette makes his little points, be it added, that this magnificent gentleman is not too proud to translate from the English without acknowledgment. The reader will guess at once the origin of *Une orage dans une alcove.*

While France follows authors who write with confidence about a country many of them have not visited, and the language of which they do not understand; while there are men to be found in Paris salons, who have never heard of Shakspere's name, and who sincerely believe that the perfidious sons

of Albion have no native composers and no native artists; what hope can we have that the present generation of Frenchmen will do us the honour of understanding us, or our Shakspere? Observe how near they have got to an idea of an English general officer: and I bought the picture in Paris in the present year! Mark the vanity of the few who *do* pretend to see the majesty of the bard of Avon. They must be his discoverers. They must pose themselves as his discoverers. He is new to them—therefore he is new to the world. They came among us savage and eccentric islanders a few years ago and found a rough jewel that we had been tossing from one obscure corner to another, totally unconscious of its worth. They took it up, and examined it. MM. Hugo and Dumas adjusted their spectacles, and agreed that the lump was a most precious stone. And forthwith they proclaimed the fact to the world: and the savage islanders gathered about the discoverers, and rubbed their hands, and

dressed their feathers for a national holiday. What, in truth, was Hamlet, until it had gone through the hands of the author of "Monte Christo"? Who troubled themselves about "*ce mauvais petit mort de* 300 *ans*"? Did Wordsworth, when he wrote—

> "We must be free *or* die, who speak the tongue
> That Shakspere spake; the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held"?

CHAPTER XIII.

A TRIP WITH GUSTAVE DORÉ.

IT was in the summer of 1855 that a young artist, then almost a boy, travelled with me to Boulogne to be present at the disembarkation of the Queen of England, on her way to visit the Emperor and Empress at St. Cloud. He was delighted with his holiday, and the companions of his journey will long remember him taking his coat off on the sands and rolling about like a young scholar just let out of school. Nor will these same companions forget how the boy artist spent the evening, covering broad sheets of paper with portraits, caricatures, and fanciful

sketches of scenery; all dashed off by the bold strokes of what appeared to be the most audacious of pencils. The lightning rapidity with which he sketched in a little book hardly larger than his thumb; broad effects and masses of troops and shipping, and crowds of country folk thronging every spot where a glimpse might be caught of the Queen of the Isles; astonished even the old pictorial correspondents of illustrated papers who saw the bright-eyed young artist at his work. I have seen an effect by Landseer, made with the snuff of a candle; I have marked Etty rounding a dimple with his thumb—the late J. W. Allen was proud of the skill (and it was remarkable) with which he could thumb in his aërial perspective; but for that force, which is exquisite in the perfect ease that is shown in its use, no sketcher with pen or pencil has ever surpassed the light-hearted, free-handed artist who carried away faithful records of a Royal landing in his waistcoat pocket.

Gustave Doré was, in 1855, already known

to the public of Paris, not merely as a vigorous caricaturist, nor as a facile and inventive illustrator, for he had already produced his edition of "Rabelais." "Rabelais" was exactly suited to the quaint, the unctuous, and, at times, the grim humour of Gustave Doré. His pencil revelled in its rich subject. He startled his countrymen with the fertility, the brightness, and the daring of his inventive faculty. He was squibbed and ridiculed by dull plodders of the classical school. His paintings (and Doré's works in oil, which he jealously keeps to himself, must be known before his place in the art of his country is finally settled) were maltreated. But the public, who saw his rapidly and boldly executed drawings day after day scattered through all the periodical literature of the time, compensated him for his ungenerous treatment by the schools. The wood blocks he has covered would fill rooms; the lithographic stones he has used would build him a house. The rapidity with which he executes a drawing, is only equalled by that with

which he can study Nature. Doré's love of his art is too deep and earnest to allow him to deal with his genius at the risk of impoverishing it. He casts himself into the forest, takes his knapsack and his staff, and treads the high road, pushes his way into odd old cities, and marks down every happy break of a line he finds there. So he is constantly replenishing his store.

And now let me mark how steadily he has progressed in the executive part of his art. His first important work after "Rabelais" was his "Wandering Jew"—a series of large drawings on wood. His mastery of light and shade, his power to produce weird effects of cavernous gloom and blinding light; his manner of hinting a horror, and his courage in putting a ghastly reality close up to the eye of the spectator, were made manifest in his interpretation of the legend of the "Wandering Jew." There was absolute grandeur in some of the scenes where the bearded Jew trod the waters; and, again, where the massed and tumbled clouds took

awful shapes, with the light of the cross shimmering over all! The defect that was apparent in these bold original conceptions, was a coarseness in the pencilling, and often an exaggeration in the contortions of the figures. Here and there, also, the ideas were coarse, as in the grave-scene.

Dante's "Inferno," which M. Doré put forth in 1862, showed that in the interim the artist had studied hard and conscientiously. His pencil had lost none of its force, and it had gained much grace. The very first plate, where Dante is lost in the dark forest, discovered the advance the artist had made. The tangled forest is exquisitely drawn. The gnarled roots of the tress starting from the broken ground; the rich undergrowth barring the way on all sides; the umbrageous boughs of the lofty trees dipping to meet the shrubs under them, and keeping the whole scene in a deep green, moist shade—are all given with exquisite fidelity to nature. The studies of scenery of every description—the wilderness of tumbled rock, the giddy

height, the fathomless abyss, the flat and dreary table-land, the dread river of Acheron where Minos sits, or where the infernal hurricane sweeps myriads through the awful gloom—were subjects most welcome to Doré.

In the year 1863 the artist broke new ground with his illustrations to Chateaubriand's "Atala." The sunny landscapes which abound in this work are beautiful studies of light and shade. The Indians are very savages, and look as wild as the wildernesses in which they are framed. But it is in M. Doré's latest work;—in his marvellous series of illustrations to "Don Quixote," that he is to be seen at his best.

The infinite variety of incident, the rich scenery, the quaint costumes, the numerous adventures included in the immortal story of the Knight of the Doleful Countenance, afforded a rare field for an artist's imagination to wander in. M. Doré did not approach his task without due preparation. He spent two years in Spain, studying to get the necessary *couleur locale*. At every page of

the really great work he has produced, we have evidences of this study. The head and tail pieces abound with most charming glimpses of Spanish village life, while the great plates are powerful studies of the broad aspects of Spanish scenery. M. Doré is apt to repeat his effects, and this is a weakness against which he should jealously guard himself. His Don Quixote, for instance, setting out on his journey, is backed by bold masses of tumbled clouds, that are thrown into shapes of fighting men and kneeling knights. This peopling of the clouds is too often repeated in M. Doré's works; but we must hasten to forgive this repetition, when we have so rare and rich a feast before us. M. Doré's studies of the lean knight are masterly conceptions. Where he stands in the moonlight, leaning on his spear and contemplating the heavens, he looks every inch the wild, chivalrous gentleman; albeit he is pacing a farmyard, and the chickens are roosting peaceably at his elbow. There is exquisite humour in the light sketches where the

knight is in disgrace; and where he is riding, propped up on Sancho Panza's mule. The second setting forth of the knight is given in a village sketch that is fresh as daybreak. The knight—his arm affectionately placed on the squat shoulders of Sancho Panza, and unconscious of the housewife, surrounded with her ragged offspring, who is cutting up vegetables for the soup, and of the lean turkeys and chickens that are crowing and cackling about—harangues his faithful follower. Sancho looks wonderingly up into the solemn and sad face of Don Quixote. The knight and his servitor sallying forth at a brisk pace in the haze of early sunlight, is an aërial effect most cunningly wrought. The two plates in which the windmill adventure is related, are as remarkable for bold conception as they are for vigorous execution. The dormouse sleeps no sounder in the winter. The tail-piece to the tenth chapter is a few strokes of the pencil, in which the knight and Sancho Panza are shown asleep 'mid the trees. You can see that a cannon would

not wake the exhausted adventurers. The famous couple, in a shady wood, both on their stomachs at the edge of the stream, and drinking from the rippling waters, is a study full of humour. In another free sketch, brimming with humour, Sancho Panza is gazing anxiously into the mouth of the recumbent knight. The adventure with the water-mill is told in a happy bit of landscape painting. The sketches of quaint old streets, the groups of ragged Spanish urchins, the rocklands, and the forest, are all admirable studies from nature. The interiors of old Spanish houses are full of rich and rare detail. Some of the eastern effects of sunlight are worthy of Decamps. The sea pieces include some exquisite effects of haze, and water, and cloud. There are some studies of plump priests that must have been made in the heart of the Peninsula. Don Quixote's entry into Barelona is a great scene, in which M. Doré shows how he can manage a Spanish mob. Sancho Panza at home, with his nearly naked children among the pigs and poultry,

is a study brought fresh from M. Doré's travels in Spain.

In short, to travel once again with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, in the company of Gustave Doré, is to enjoy an intimacy with the knight we never knew before. The noble sadness of his countenance is impressed upon our memory, and the jolly face of Sancho is perpetual sunshine to us. We follow them both to the end of their adventures with a new pleasure, escorted by the rich and rare genius of the artist; and never leave them until they are safely returned home, and Don Quixote lies on his deathbed, with Sancho Panza weeping at his side. M. Doré's drawings are beautifully engraved by H. Pisan. The work is, in short, a gift for a king's daughter. It is one of the gems of our salon—a never-failing treasury of amusement in our home; as, I trust, his and my LONDON will be, when we shall have completed the pilgrimage together on which we have been bound together so long.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROGRESS, FROM A FRENCH POINT OF VIEW.

M. ABOUT (whom I have followed from the day when he gave "Tolla" to the world, and whose last book reaches my study wet from the press) has the faculty of making himself amusing. He is always bright and picturesque—whether dealing with the temporalities of the Pope or surveying the universe at the suggestion of Madame George Sand; or, as we shall presently perceive, dealing with the horrors of war. He is a strong writer, and his contrasts are striking. His boldness never deserts him, even when he is dealing with matters which have given

pause to the greatest intellects. The book I hold in my hand is M. About's frank opinion of his contemporaries, and on the spirit of the times. He has obliged the world with this comprehensive confession on things sacred and profane, at the instigation of Madame Sand, to whom he dedicates it. The capital with which he starts on his intellectual journey round the world, he lays bluntly before his readers:—"I have received from nature," he says, "only an atom of good sense—a crumb swept from under the table where Rabelais and Voltaire, Frenchmen *par excellence*, ate their bellyful." We turn to M. About's school. "The school to which I belong," he admits, "is composed of positive minds, that are antagonistic to all the seductions of hypothesis, and will only reckon up demonstrated facts. We do not deny the existence of a supernatural world: we only wait until its existence is proved, and meantime, we shut ourselves up within the limits of the real."

And, with this confession, M. About starts

on his long journey, noting, in his own way, all the progresses of the world, from its nebulous to its present condition. He treats of the brute creation as well as of man; and of both with freedom. He handles the gorilla, as knowing more about him than Prof. Owen, or any other comparative anatomist. He affirms that it is a question of slender importance whether or not man sprang from the animal next in rank to him. M. About, however, accepts man as the supreme effort of nature—nature's latest work—but he is not prepared to admit that the human race may not be, in its turn, superseded: that the hunter of to-day may not be the game in the future.

M. About defines Progress—as he understands it. It is the advancement of the human being, both morally and physically. He takes the Indian's view, that every man who has planted a tree before he dies, has not lived in vain.

From these starting-points, the author casts his eyes over the world, and endeavours to

sum up the results of human activity on the globe: to define that which is good; to explain man's rights; to shadow forth the effects of association; to discuss property, the budget, education, politics, war—in short, human affairs generally. The result of the manner in which M. About has executed his ambitious plan is not a profound, but an eloquent, a various, and a highly-amusing book. It is full of happy turns of thought, of quaint fancies, and of generous aspirations. It will be read, not for the philosophy that is in it, but for the brightness, the vigour, and the completeness shown in the treatment of each separate subject. Even the audacity of the writer, who talks of the time when man was "a promising subaltern in the great army of monkeys," has its attraction. M. About marshals a few of the men who will deserve well of posterity. The passage, it seems to me, is in his best manner:—

"And we also, poor scribblers, we shall have well deserved our future. It is not only because a small pamphleteer named Pascal invented the wheelbarrow, nor

because two or three others solved the problem of aërial navigation ; nor even because somebody or other from time to time enounced a truth of universal interest, such as the sovereignty of the people, or the principle of nationality. Were we only simple mediums, hawkers of ideas, and nothing more, our part would be an important one. Ideas, like capital, multiply by circulation ; it follows, therefore, that we fulfil the same functions as M. de Rothschild, only at a lower remuneration—that is the difference. A few days ago, as I came along the road to Phalsbourg, I met with a little pedlar, who appeared to be between forty and fifty. He was sitting down to rest on a block of stone. I sat down beside him, and after we had exchanged remarks as to the weather, I asked him if he was contented with his lot. He shook his head in a melancholy way, and answered, 'I am a dealer in spectacles, a travelling dealer, as you see. Business would do well enough, for even the poorest and most ignorant men now-a-days like to see. The worst of it is, that you cannot enter a village without the boys throwing stones at you, and without the *gendarmes* asking for your "papers." One can easily get rid of the *gamins*, but the *gendarmes* are the devil. They cross-question you, as if you were a felon; and the annoyance of being taken for what I am not, has tempted me a thousand times to abandon the whole thing. I go on, however ; for one must live; and, besides, I say to myself every night when I go to bed, that many people, men and brothers, would be blind if I did not carry to their distant villages the means of seeing.' 'Hold there,' cried I, 'nearly all my friends carry on the same trade as yourself. They hawk about

all over France and Europe glasses of all kinds, suited to the eyes of the people. They sell pink glasses, in which the unhappy see a future of justice and equality ; they have blue ones, which permit a simple citizen to look at gilded thrones and glittering crowns without being in the least dazzled ; then there are magnifying glasses, by which a useful man will appear to you ten times greater than a prefect in all his glory. By the aid of instruments which they carry about, even into the country, you will see cheats unmasked, oppressors turned out, burdens lightened, men all united to do good ; truth, labour, and right reigning every where.' '*Parbleu !* my good sir, that commerce resembles mine just as a telescope of a hundred thousand francs resembles a ten-sous pair of spectacles. I should hope that your friends have nothing to fear from *gamins* or *gendarmes.*' 'To tell you the truth, they are principally inconvenienced by the *chefs-de-bureau.*' The hawker lifted his hat at the name, for every one in France knows that the *chefs-de-bureau* have been, from time immemorial, the real masters of the country. It is, thanks to their prudence, and in the interest of their security, that the press has never been free. Sovereigns, who read little, care but indifferently for what is written ; it happens sometimes that ministers are bold enough to follow out their own path, without fearing criticism. But the most liberal prince and the most intrepid minister will never obtain liberty for us from the *chefs-du-bureau.* Each of them is firmly convinced that every journalist wants to sell red glasses to the people, in order to overthrow the Government, and take possession of the *bureaux.* Alas ! what should we

do there? Our humble trade of dealers in spectacles would still be the best, and the most useful to Progress that we could pursue. Much better remain as we are, although we come in for none of the general rejoicings, although the kind public does not always recompense us for the rigours of administration, and although we ourselves do not perceive, even in the far-distant horizon, that consolation of the proud—glory! We must, then, make our choice; we shall never obtain but collective glory. No one of us—unless by an extraordinary and unforseen chance—will ever leave his name to posterity. But, after all, what matters? The good that we shall have left will not be lost. Let us work."

The fourth division of the work treats of Labour. In the opening page M. About reminds his readers of the workmen's song of 1848. Work is liberty! M. About is then at some pains to show that labour is not a duty, but a destiny—a natural law. And he ridicules the aristocratic contempt for work which, he alleges, is still firmly rooted among his countrymen. "Whom to marry" in France is humorously set forth. Passages like the following abound in M. About's "Progress:"—

"A manufacturer, who has enriched himself by the most useful, and, therefore, the most noble of industries,

believes that in marrying his daughter to a Marquis he elevates himself a rank higher in the social scale. The older the family of the young man the more exulting the father-in-law. Only think! for four hundred years no one person in the family of my son-in-law has ever made any use of his ten fingers! If a gentleman cannot be got, a son of a bourgeois family is selected. His parents have worked; it is unfortunate; but thanks to Heaven! they have retired from business now upwards of ten years. We are quite easy as to him; *he* shall never do any thing. An official is another advantageous selection. Officials do so little in our admirable country! They go to their offices to ease their conscience; their duties are so slight that they have almost the right to call themselves pensioners of the State. The most sought after amongst them are naturally those who gain the most money with the least fatigue. For instance, a Receiver-General leaving college! That is what is called a very deserving young man! A hundred thousand francs to earn, and nothing to do! At the most a few signatures to make: a white negro, his representative, does all the rest. And this person is a somebody!—the third authority in the department. What father would hesitate ten minutes between an official and a man of business, even were the latter ten times the richer and more intelligent of the two? The official is almost a gentleman; he does so little! When a young girl is unfortunately reduced to marry a handsome young man, rich, well educated, honourable, well brought up, and gaining twenty thousand crowns a year in business, she is a long time in explaining her fall to her school friend. 'My husband

is in business, but in a very large way: a great deal of it is wholesale. He does very little in it; indeed, he scarcely goes to his office for more than half an hour a day. However, we think of giving it up altogether shortly.' The friend, who is going to marry a sub-prefect, with four thousand five hundred francs a year, embraces her warmly, and says, "Poor dear little thing. I shall always feel the same towards you. My husband has no prejudices: you must present your husband to us *when he has retired!*'"

The ridiculous side of the question could not be more happily put. The author strengthens his position in favour of work, with personal references. He informs his readers that M. Victor Hugo has been consoled during his exile in Guernsey by the enlightened and scholarly friendship of a grocer, who owns an admirable library. A grocer is, in France—well, less than a tailor is in England. M. About confesses that he knows a young cavalry officer who left the army to become a grocer, and who remains a perfect gentleman behind the counter. Another friend, who was a public teacher, has degraded himself to the rank of a purveyor of sardines! And M. About would like to know

what the deposed one has lost. "I am sure that he is no longer asked to the rector's *soirées*, and that he has lost thereby three glasses of *eau sucrée*." As a compensation, the sardine vendor is making a fortune. Here is an example of the author's breadth of view :—

"There was an epoch when two poor men used to carry a rich one about the streets of Paris in his chair. This disgraceful exhibition, which astonished no one in 1764, would cause an *émeute* now-a-days. Man no longer likes to see his species doing the duty of a horse. We possess now, in 1864, 3,000,000 of horses, asses, and mules, and 2,000,000 of draught oxen. This is a pretty beginning, but it is not the end of our progress. 29,000,000 of inhabitants who people Great Britain have made with their own hands 83,000,000 of metallic horses, without counting their other cattle. These 83,000,000 of cast-iron animals, which consume coal instead of corn, do the work, taking one year with another, of 400,000,000 of men. Thus each islander is served by the power of thirteen or fourteen men who feel neither fatigue nor pain, and whom the engineer cures with a hammer when they are ill. Here are successors already found for our mere day labourers. Have you quite understood me? It is neither desirable nor likely that man's labour should disappear from the earth, but with a little energy we may create instruments that will mitigate its severity for our

descendants. It is for us to save future generations unnecessary and endless fatigue, and so to deliver them from the degradation which it causes."

M. About dreams of the days when there will be no ploughmen toiling in the furrow; and when steam and electricity will do all the hard work of farming. He marks what progress the world has already made; and where he looks forward, glances with a liberal eye, and hopes with a generous heart. And so I put him in a snug corner on a favourite shelf.

But how have his hopes been deceived! He has seen the ploughman dragged from the furrow, to fill gaping trenches on the morrow of barbarous battle!

CHAPTER XV.

GOSSIP ABOUT BOOKS.

AMONG the dozens of books that made their way to our *salon* table, there were few indeed that would bear close critical examination. Many were not merely harmless. They dealt with that part of social France which had better be veiled from the young and innocent.

Running over the titles of scores of these yellow or green paper-covered books, and marking the contents of some, a few of the more serious Frenchmen of the present time wonder what condition society will be in, when the rising generation has advanced to the

front of human affairs, its mind saturated with the poisonous romance of the *demi-monde!*

Let us pass by these stories of women without shame, and men without principle; let us drop into our waste-paper basket, cut into a hundred pieces, this copy of a Holywell Street book that is now in vogue translated into French; and mark a few volumes that have innocent amusement, and now and then a grain or two of useful knowledge in them. Barry Cornwall writes:—

> "Dip thy young brain in wise men's deep discourse,—
> In books, which though they freeze thy wit awhile,
> Will knit thee, i' the end, with wisdom."

The youth of France shun the deep discourse, and will not cool their wit, that they may gather wisdom.

M. Deschanel attracts us by a suggestive subject. The critic who pretends to be able to pass a ripe and complete judgment on the works of others, must, according to M. Deschanel, be able to take up a book, and, from the savour of it, to describe, not only the

epoch in which it was written, but also the climate and the country wherein it was conceived[1]. His perceptive and analytical power must go deeper yet. He must describe the race from which the author sprang; the sex, perhaps the age, but "certainly the complexion, the temperament, the humour; and —who knows?—the health." To the critic who can so far complete the physiological history of any author, from the book he has produced; the labour of eliminating his character, his education, his habits, his rank, and his profession from his printed page, will be child's-play. Since there are sapient wizards who can describe a man's character by merely examining his handwriting, why should not M. Deschanel be able to give us the colour of an author's hair from his book? He takes for his basis Plato's definition of a man, as a soul making use of a body. Then he proceeds to develope what he conceives to be the influ-

[1] Physiology of Writers and Artists (*Physiologie des Ecrivains et des Artistes*, par Emile Deschanel). Paris: Hachette & Co.

ences of the body on the mind. We ought to see the body as well as the mind of an author in his books. With this idea before him, the author of this essay on "Natural Criticism" has filled nearly 400 solid pages with examples of literary, artistic, and musical geniuses; whose works, according to him, clearly described the external influences to which they were subjected; their race, their temperament, and their social condition. Without following the author through the wealthy list of his instances, let me dip upon him where he touches us. I am afraid that, if his French, German, and other instances have not a closer relation to the truth than his English examples can boast, his "Physiology of Writers and Artists" will not greatly promote the study of "Natural Criticism." His work may enjoy a wide popularity in France, for the simple reason that he makes his native climate that where genius grows in perfection. D'Alembert said that Burgundy was the climate of mind and genius; happily situated, it enjoys a mild temperature, and receives only the kindly

rays of the sun. The welcome degree of heat which makes its wines excellent, gives a just maturity to its intellects. In Montaigne, M. Deschanel sees a perfect Anglo-Gascon. His father being an Englishman, Montaigne derived his imagination, his wit, and his sensual richness from his Gascon mother, and only that which was practical, positive, and egotistical in his character from his English father. His gold was French, his alloy English.

Shakspere, we are told, without knowing any thing of Montaigne's descent, stole from him, as from a relative, "by instinct." M. Deschanel passes from the effect of climate on genius, to that of sex. He quotes Marivaux, who said, "Style has a sex, and you can detect a woman in one sentence." The author not only detects the sex, but the nationality also, of a box of the ears as well as of a book. He describes the rap which the fair Bellamy gave an indiscreet gallant before a whole theatre. The *actrice* has narrated the incident in her Memoirs. M. Deschanel quotes the passage as one that only an Englishwoman

could have written. A Frenchwoman would never have put the incident in this form. "Remark," he adds, "that this Englishwoman is one of the most natural and sincere that ever existed, but we sniff the prudery always." For a hundred leagues round Albion that moral "*tartine* cant is on the wind." Having found "Uncle Tom's Cabin" unreadable, our theorist passes to a few more English female writers: among others, to the author of "A Life of Madame Récamier." This author, unfortunately, refers to the great mortality among women in India, on account of their too early marriages, and suggests that an inquiry should be made into the subject. This suggestion stamps the nationality of the book, according to M. Prévost Paradol, as well as M. Deschanel. The latter exclaims, "An inquiry! This is truly English. Inquiries enter so much into their customs (and we should congratulate them on the fact), that they are introduced at every turn into their literature. The finest dramas of Shakspere, his most tragic catastrophe, would

not be complete without an inquiry. 'Quick! let the coroner be called,' even when the scene is in Denmark, as in 'Hamlet.' It has yet to be discovered whether or not Ophelia committed suicide, and whether she is worthy or unworthy of having Christian burial. At the end of 'Romeo and Juliet' there is an inquiry! At the end of 'Othello,' an inquiry! To Frenchmen this would spoil the *dénouement;* but to Englishmen it completes the truth, and satisfies the public conscience."

The age, the temperament, the character, and the professions of writers are treated, and the author enlivens his exposition with a copious supply of anecdotes, and scraps of reading. He draws his illustrations from a hundred sources, old as well as new. He skips from Voltaire to Alexandre Dumas. *Apropos* of the latter, who is supposed to have carried the stormy passions of his youth into his later life; he relates a joke made by the younger Dumas, who said, "My father is a big child whom I had when I was quite little." . In another place the reader is told

that M. Alexandre Dumas will relate to any body who listens to him, that he owes his perpetual cheerfulness and brightness to a good stomach. This is in a chapter on hereditary physical and moral qualities. Herein Dr. Raspail is quoted as having truly said that Jean Jacques Rousseau, in robust health, would have been the darling echo of his century: whereas Jean Jacques sick, was the eloquent reformer of it.

The chapter in which M. Deschanel reviews the well-known book by Dr. Moreau on Morbid Psychology, is interesting, as well as amusing. The Doctor, it will be remembered, comes to the conclusion that genius is a disease of the nerves; Balzac having described it as an intermittent fever. The chapter on the diet and habits of authors is full of lively matter, in which not only Brillat de Savarin's celebrated book is recommended, but the reader's attention is drawn to a quaint lecture by a certain Prof. Babrius, entitled "The Influence of Wine on Civilization." M. Deschanel admits us, here and

there, into the intimacy of prominent contemporaries. We find that M. Michelet rises at six in the morning, and having swallowed some coffee, works till noon. He says that the coffee sustains him. "No!" cries M. Deschanel, "it carries him away. We smell it in his style." Michelet attributes the revolutionary spirit of the eighteenth century to the introduction of coffee; and, to the use of tobacco, the cloudy condition of the French mind in these latter days.

Let English ladies judge how they are used in M. Deschanel's book. Where he speaks of musicians, he tells his readers (having first informed them that the Anglo-Saxon race has no musical qualities) "that the English, and especially English women, in music, as in morals, sing false naturally." A paragraph more, and we are dismissed with this defiance: "Tell me, I pray you," cries M. Deschanel, "who are the great musicians of England? America is even worse off. Read Alfred Assolant and Oscar Commettant." All we can say is, that if M.

Assolant knows no more of America than he knows of England, the Yankees need not be disturbed by any criticism of his. M. Deschanel provides himself with a few neat bits of original ignorance with regard to us, in addition to the stock which he has borrowed from various quarters. He tells his readers, for instance, that there are days in London when people hang themselves. A foot-note adds to this information that these days are during the winds and fogs of October.

Crowds of examples, all amusingly, if not correctly, presented to the reader, are, in short, grouped in chapters, to sustain the fundamental idea of M. Deschanel's essay. His object is, as he describes it in a few words, "to show that in a page, or sometimes in less, the critic may discover, from the general style and manner of a great writer, his temperament and his character; his habits and his profession; his age, and the state of his health; his social *status*, his race, his native country, his epoch, and his physical and moral climate." At any rate,

M. Deschanel has produced an odd volume. If the philosophy of it be weak, it is weak chiefly through the vanity that assumes the intellectual supremacy of France in every path of knowledge, in every highway and byway of art and science. An anecdote quoted by M. Deschanel himself, describes the spirit that pervades his volume:—"The Duchess of La Ferte said to Madame de Staël, 'I must own to you, my dear creature, that I find nobody except myself who is always in the right.'"

"The Memoirs of a Kiss!" Here is a book that has, at least, a title to recommend[2]! It is a book for the Boulevards, to be bought after dinner at the *Librairie Nouvelle*, or the *Librairie Centrale*, carried home, read rapidly, and thrown away. It is a fantastic, frothy, uninstructive book. It is amusing here and there, but in the main it is tedious. We follow the Kiss from lip to lip, and from

[2] Memoirs of a Kiss (*Mémoires d'un Baiser*). Par Jules Noriac.

cheek to cheek, through centuries, and into various places. It lies in a grave, on the cheek of a murderer for years, and is disinterred by accident. It is wrecked on an uninhabited island. It passes through all grades of society, from scullion to king. It rests upon false lips and hollow cheeks. At last it finds its way to the keeping of a country wench, who gives it to her soldier lad, as he starts for the wars. The soldier is killed on the field of battle, and as he expires, he sends the kiss into the air. The Kiss, having no longer a local habitation, is tired of a *flâneur's* life in the blue ether, and writes its Memoirs —to while away the lagging hours! This is wild enough, but French story-tellers are almost at their wits' end for novelty. The *lorettes* will not twist into new combinations; descriptions of sumptuous apartments inhabited by the elegant vicious have palled of late; and M. About, with all his picturesque force, will not, we opine, collect much more material in the *Quartier Bréda*. It would seem that French writers will presently be compelled to

take honest folk for sitters, out of sheer necessity. Morality, between green and yellow covers, will be a sensational novelty. Some original writer will arise and draw a faithful wife, a true husband, and young heroes moved by honourable attachments. Perhaps he will be met with laughter and derision at first, but since every thing that is new is welcome in Paris, he has a good chance of making a successful stand. Meantime, the Parisians are offered the "Memoirs of a Kiss" as an experiment. There is not a *lorette* of the modern and familiar type in it. The Kiss is not always on the purest of lips, but it does not keep bad company as a rule. M. Noriac pilots his Kiss through a series of scenes with considerable skill. He paints with a broad brush. The introductory chapter, for instance, wherein the Kiss is born, is a sketch that has the freshness of the woods in it. The portrait of the poacher is excellent. The Kiss was born in the spring, when "all Nature was singing the Marseillaise of love." From the lips of a poor country girl it goes on its

whimsical journey round the world. How it travelled about the king's palace is amusingly told. The Kiss, in the third chapter of its Memoirs, discourses on its fellow kisses :—

"There are people in the world ignorant enough to imagine that the simple touch of the lips on a cheek or a forehead is sufficient to constitute a kiss! Can simplicity go further? Can this age of impurity, corruption, progress, and perfection, produce greater *naïveté?* Before entering on the history of my adventures, it is necessary that I should explain what a kiss, a genuine kiss is. The number of kisses circulating in the world is more limited than one imagines, at most there are a thousand. I speak from experience, for I have known them all in the course of my long career; we have met on many a face. 'What!' you will cry out, 'only a thousand kisses amongst millions of human beings who have been loving and fighting each other during the last five thousand years? It is very little; somebody, surely, must have gone without!' I am right, Madame; about a thousand. But I see you smile, no doubt thinking that you yourself have given ten times as many. I am not going to deny a truth which your crimson lips render evident. Only you are perhaps ignorant, for of course you have loved in good earnest, that in all the twenty thousand kisses you have given, there have not been above three,—well, say four,—real ones, the rest are but make-weights. You must remember that Heaven has not been lavish of good things. Without being exactly miserly, it does the

honours of Creation like a thorough-bred gentleman, and that is all. Heaven says to man, 'You shall have one Love;' to woman, 'One youth;' to Nature, 'One Sun.' Kisses are the stars of love: whatever foolish people may say, the number of the stars is limited. There is one which we call the star of Venus; there is one kiss which we call the kiss of Judas. Like the star of Venus in the heavens, the kiss of Judas on earth often appears, but it is always the same kiss, just as it is always the same star."

There are ghastly scenes in this book, which, while they proclaim the power and the skill of the author, condemn his taste. The quarrel between Gouthier and his wife, because Madame will not permit her husband to go to his barber's to be shaved, is wonderfully true to life, and abounds with happy touches; but the catastrophe is revolting. The man cuts his wife's throat, poisons himself in prison, and carries the Kiss with him into his grave. Then follow the experiences of the Kiss—under the murderer's shroud!

The journey of the Kiss on the lips of a naval officer, who was with La Pérouse; the wreck on the uninhabited island, and the life there with an English officer; are the most

amusing parts of M. Noriac's strange, fantastic, and, many will say, ridiculous book. The story of the uninhabited island is full of the grossest absurdities,—but, I repeat, it is amusing. The Kiss, lying on the murderer's cheek and underground, makes the following observations :—

"Many long days passed away. The roots of the trees grew and strengthened, and at last became very inconvenient to me. My position was so sad that it appeared to me impossible to be more unhappy. The source of sorrow seemed to be exhausted. However, fresh misfortunes were in store for me. The clematis appeared to have a fondness for the honeysuckle ; she loved—at least I thought so—but with the tranquil love of a pale flower. On the contrary, the vigorous honeysuckle loved passionately ; he struggled with all his might to entwine his branches around those of his cold beloved.. But Love is blind ; and in the warmth of his amorous desires, the honeysuckle scarcely noticed the skull of the unfortunate Gouthier, which he almost crushed between his gnarled roots. Sometimes horrible rumblings and cracks were heard ; then how I deplored my wretched fate ! To live on the buried skull of a bourgeois malefactor is not certainly an enviable position ; still better that, perhaps, than to be—nothing. Suppose the honeysuckle, I thought to myself, by continually rubbing against the skull, ends by pulverizing it ! What, then, will become

of me? Holding by nothing, I must surely die! If I had the happiness of believing in the theory of metempsychosis, I might indulge in a few joyful imaginings. I might see myself live again in some lovely flower or gorgeous insect. I might pass through to earth, and enter by the throat, into the soul of a nightingale! A single kiss! what could be more delicious? Unhappily, I was ignorant; and ignorance believes in nothing. The light of religion had never dawned on my mind, and now in my misfortune I had neither faith nor hope to console me. However, it was decreed that the hour of my deliverance should be at hand. One Monday—Here the reader will cry out, 'This Kiss is an impostor. What! he is buried underground for fifty years, and he tries to persuade me that, after half a century, he knows the day of the week on which he was liberated.' Good reader, judge me neither hastily nor unkindly. Allow me to assure you that, although three feet under ground, I knew the days by their names, and could even reckon the hours. It was simple enough. When the portion of earth under which I lived was dug up, and the honeysuckle planted which caused me so much annoyance, I was not long in finding out the reason of the disturbance. From the noise overhead, the music, the jumping, the shouts of joy which reached my ears, I soon judged that the place of repose, shut for so many years—had been turned into a *guinguette*, where every body came on Sundays, to love, to dance, to sing, to laugh, to eat, and to drink. Reckoning the days was not difficult, because at night the earth became cold. The music and gaiety were heard at regular intervals—that is to

seventh day, and the Sunday was the day consecrated to it, as I imagined. I have entered at length into these details, so as to be free from the necessity of giving further explanations should I again be accused of imposture during the course of this extraordinary narrative. It was on a Monday, then, at daybreak, that I heard a loud and unusual knocking above me."

The garments of a bishop are discovered; and the diggers, being anxious to turn their prize to account (the bishop having disappeared in dust), put the skull of the murderer in the bishop's mitre. The skull is worshipped by the devout, and kissed by a fair devotee! The reader will have seen by this time that the author is a bold inventor of incidents, and there is a grim humour about his work occasionally. M. About's "Cas de M. Guérin" is not wilder than these "Memoirs of a Kiss."

From the whimsical, we push round the table to where a volume lies that is welcome, after all the blunders and libels, and absurdities of the Weys, the Assolants, and indeed the mass of the Paris *chroniqueurs*, who know no more about England than an average Englishman knows about the intimate social

customs of the Ashantees. Let M. Gouraud be presented to the reader. He, at least, sees something more than coal, iron, and "spleen" in us.

In a bold work[3] a Frenchman calmly and elaborately compares England with the rest of Europe,—nay, places her beside all the nations of the earth, and gives her the advantage. He reviews her history from the time of Alfred down to the signature of the Peace of Paris in the latter part of the last century; he enters minutely into the elements which went to produce the English race; he points out to his countrymen the wondrous power of the English language, as first exhibited by Shakspere; he describes the rise and fall of the Steelyard Company, and the first dawn of British commerce towards the close of Elizabeth's reign; and, above all, he ventures to advance, for the admiration of his countrymen, as the highest development of political

[3] History of the Origin of England's Greatness (*Histoire des Causes de la Grandeur de l'Angleterre*, &c.). By Charles Gouraud. Paris, Durand.

wisdom, the institutions which we have had the patience as a people to build up, and which we have now the good sense to respect. According to M. Gouraud, the English people alone understand the spirit of freedom; while other nations interpret it as a licence to live in wild disorder. And he seems to attribute our better appreciation to the various races from which we spring. Indeed, so flattering are the words of M. Gouraud, to English ears, that they cannot fail to please. At least, the giant strength of intellect he gives us has left us the weakness to love songs sung in our honour. Such a song, it must be confessed, trilled in French, sounds oddly to our ears:—for, hitherto, we have been accustomed to hear only of our fogs and coals from Jules Lecomte,—of our general absurdities from Paul Féval,—and of our *décadence* from Ledru Rollin;—while Thiers has always done his best to depreciate our value in the political world. This first serious note of praise, however, will be welcome in England, as evidence that the people of France are beginning to

understand our value as men, and our solid advantages as a people. Last year they learned for the first time that such things as easels and palettes are seen in England, and are used with some effect: still, they have yet to know that our merchants read and think, and that we cultivate a national literature. And such books as this by M. Gouraud will go far to remove that contempt for our practical spirit in which every Frenchman has hitherto considered it part of a polité education to indulge; while they will prove to our neighbours (who need the lesson) that the stern business of the world may be conscientiously and energetically carried on, without neglecting the refinements of literature and art.

Known already as the author of a "History of the Commercial Policy of France," and of an "Essy on Free Trade," M. Gouraud was naturally led to deal with his present subject. An enthusiastic free-trader, he sees in the free-trade policy of England one of her claims

still to rank as the first nation upon earth. He marks three eras in her splendid fortunes: the first, ending with the appearance of Shakspere; the second, closed by the death of William the Third; and the last, that in which she actually exists. These three eras are respectively described as her infancy, her manhood, and her preponderance or sovereignty. For the spirit in which the author reviews these eras,—taking up generally our commercial progress, and not that of our parliaments or our letters,—I cannot do better than refer to the Preface, by which the reader is introduced to his three pictures. After having compared England—that is, commercial England—with Tyre and Sidon, and Carthage and Alexandria, Venice and Genoa, Antwerp and Lübeck,—and having shown that these ancient centres of human activity were but little wayside hives, when compared with the wondrous area over which British commerce now extends,—M. Gouraud turns to contemplate Englishmen, and to de-

scribe them as he sees them at work in the world :—

"What a nation! (he exclaims). Foremost in intelligence and in the application of the useful arts, she disputes the palm in other regions of activity, and carries it in some. Is this all? No. Add that this great people is free! Free! when the rest of mankind, while pretending to rival them, can only move with anarchy, or rest in servitude. Free! that is, equally capable of discussing and respecting their laws. Free! that is, wise enough to govern themselves, and to suffice among themselves for the direction of their own affairs. Other mercantile nations before England have been, or have believed themselves to be, free; but what was the liberty of Carthage, of Venice, or even that of Amsterdam, beside that of London? a word beside a reality! And then England, to the imposing material and intellectual spectacle which she offers to the world, may add a third still more striking—and undoubtedly the fairest that can be seen under the heavens—viz. the moral spectacle of a nation, that depends upon herself alone. To have a complete idea, however, of the unprecedented grandeur of this nation, we must also take into consideration that, unlike her predecessors in commerce, who never held more than the most limited moral influence over the nations with which they came in contact, she acts more than any other on the destinies, the mind, and the manners of the rest of the world. Already she is the model school for the agriculturists, the manufacturers, the navigators, and the merchants of the universe. Then,

inasmuch as by reason of her immense territorial possessions there is no language so widely spread as hers, she exercises an incalculable influence over the human mind. There are only a few cultivated spirits who, beyond the frontiers of their respective countries, read Dante or Molière; while Shakspere has readers in every latitude of the globe. And then, too, when the free press or the free tribune of London expresses a sentiment, an idea, or a vow, this sentiment, this vow, this idea makes the tour of the world. When Junius writes, or Pitt speaks, the universe reads and listens. Thanks, in short, may be given to the justice of Providence, that the people to whom this immense and redoubtable empire has been accorded can use it only to elevate human intelligence and human dignity: for their language, even in the greatest excesses of passion, is always the manly and vivifying utterance of free men. Such is the fine spectacle which the British Empire offers to our generation."

We may fairly regard the above appreciation of England's position in the world as the fruit of the alliance; and as evidence, which we should all welcome, that intellectual Frenchmen are beginning to perceive that we are not altogether, as described by Jules Lecomte, "coal and iron." The following description of the Anglican type is a fairer

view of us than any I can remember to have read in the French language :—

"About a century after the descent of William, when the violence of the first years after the Conquest had begun to give way before a milder *régime*, it may be said that the great work was accomplished. It was then that a distinct type of a people appeared, which has never had its like in any age of history—and the powerful originality of which eight centuries have only served to deepen. Then appeared a race of men whose appearance, manners, and mind have remained so marvellously distinct from the rest of the human family, that at the present time an individual of it, met under any latitude, is recognized before he has spoken ; in short, then appeared the English people. How admirable are the care, the energy, and the perseverance with which Nature works, through centuries, at the formation of the nations which she has destined to civilize certain territories ! We have here an example with which it is impossible not to be struck. In the designs of God on the progress of the human race, it is written that England shall play a great part in the development of Western civilization. For this purpose a people must be formed—I was going to say, must be wrought—whose powerful constitution shall be capable of fulfilling the great task. What takes place ? The tribes who were indigenous to this island, being too feeble for such a destiny, are conquered, driven away, or destroyed. Saxons replace them. These Saxons, being found insufficient in their turn, are invaded by the Danes. They fight with each other at first, and then melt into a

common race. But even this fusion not giving a perfectly satisfactory result, the Normans arrive, whose accession realizes at last the type of the people so long sought after and expected. All this takes up an immense length of time—brings down horrible calamities, and necessitates gigantic efforts—but nothing stops, nothing moves, nothing casts down the indomitable and pitiless energy of Nature's work. She labours in the moral as in the physical world. See in the depths of the earth, or in the caves of the ocean, how rich metals—gold, the diamond, the pearl—are elaborated! The forces here at work, in analyses, transformations, and experiments, and the time expended are incalculable. And so in the moral world, when Nature has something rare to produce she exhibits the like perseverance and insensibility—the like exclusive determination to her end. She acted in this way in the formation of the English nation. She counted neither sacrifices, revolutions, nor centuries. Because, in this instance—and succeeding ages were destined to prove it, she was making a diamond."

The blood of Saxons and Normans were confounded for ever, according to M. Gouraud, upon the battle-fields of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt,—and from it sprang the English people.

M. Gouraud's work is valuable, not only as a clear and fair statement of the rise of com-

merce in England, and of the power we have derived from its extension backed by our high moral and political excellence—but also as a contribution to the historical literature of France, that will tend to raise us in the estimation of our too lightly critical neighbours.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD THEATRE TIMES.

M. JOUSLIN DE LASALLE was once the manager of the Comédie Française. In his time he picked up great quantities of gossip, both before and behind the curtain—gossip that included known as well as unknown names. That which described in his lively way the last *habitué* of the stalls was full of interest, and ran something after this fashion :—

You might have noticed in the second row of the orchestra stalls to the right, and always in the same place, a little old man, with regular features and powdered hair.

The eyes were full of expression and vivacity, and his observant manner harmonized well with his keen and caustic intelligence. This little old man was the Marquis de ——, *bel esprit*, and one of the last *gentilhommes* of the eighteenth century. On terms of intimacy with Voltaire, and himself a poet, he had been one of the *habitués* of the Café Procope; —that *café* which was a kind of Parisian newspaper, and in which judgments were formed on the theatres and literature of the day. He had known Cagliostro, the celebrated prestidigitator, who was at that time, the wonder of all Europe; he had attended the lectures of the German Doctor, Mesmer, the discoverer of animal magnetism. The Marquis also remembered that singular person the Count de Saint-Germain, who was so prodigal of his gold and diamonds, though no one could discover their source; and that audacious actor who pretended to have fought by the side of Cæsar, to have witnessed the triumph of Trajan, and to have supped with Aspasia, Lucretia, and Cleopatra.

"One day," said the Marquis, "I and several of my friends determined to convict this man, whom the talk of the town had elevated into a sort of demigod, of falsehood. He had a servant, Joseph, who appeared to have been with him some time. We watched our opportunity, and on one occasion when there was a banquet, '*chez la Guimard*, we disguised ourselves as valets, and slipped into the antechamber, where we knew we should find Joseph. The conversation turned on the merits, faults, and habits of the masters, and in this way we hoped to get something out of Joseph: but no; he was quite silent, in spite of all our endeavours. 'Pardieu!' said I, at last impatient at his obstinacy, 'at least you can tell us the age of your master?' 'I am ignorant of his age,' answered he; 'all I know is, that I have been with him *four hundred years*.'"

The Marquis was fond of talking, and talked well; he had seen much, and observed much. At the age of twenty he wrote "Don Carlos," which had some success on

the stage. In the commencement of his career, he had mixed a great deal in that theatrical life of which so much was talked and so little known; he had seen all the great theatrical stars of the eighteenth century—those artistes who were as much distinguished by their knowledge as by their simplicity. He liked talking of them. "Lekain," said he, "lived in the midst of his books; Brizard, a distinguished connoisseur in painting, was himself a very clever artist; Molé, Mouvel, Grandménil, were all Members of the Institute. I paid a visit to Mdlle. Dumesnil one day in the country, and found her sitting by the side of a well, with a 'Suetonius' in her hand; she was studying the part of Agrippina. I well remember," added the Marquis, "a rehearsal of the 'Earl of Essex,' to which I had taken Lord Stanhope, who was then in Paris."

"'Who plays the Queen?' said he, looking about for the actress who was to fill the part.

"'There she is,' I answered, pointing out a very quiet-looking person.

"'What! That woman there, knitting?'

"'Precisely.'

"Lord Stanhope could not recover from his surprise; the actress, sitting quietly, while waiting for her 'cue,' upset all his theories. His astonishment soon ceased, however, when Mdlle. Dumesnil rose, put down her knitting, and walked on to the stage with inexpressible majesty. She had not yet said a word, when Lord Stanhope cried out, 'Ah! there, indeed, is Elizabeth of England!'

"Already at this period, Mdlle. Clairon and Lekain had brought about a happy reform in stage costume, and in 1759 the Théâtre Français came to a decision which gave general satisfaction to the public. It was resolved to do away with the seats hitherto placed on each side of the stage. The theatre was thus, at last, freed from those useless gentlemen whose coming, for the most part, caused only scandal. Listen to what happened one night to the Marquis de Sablé, who came to the theatre after

having drunk deeply of wine. They were playing Daucourt's 'Opéra de Village,' when just as they commenced singing 'Que les prés seront *sablés*,' the Marquis appeared. '*Sablé?*' cried he; 'I am insulted.' He sought out Daucourt, found him in the *coulisses*, and struck him. Daucourt immediately drew his sword, but the Marquis was dragged away and borne to his carriage, amidst the laughter and jeers of the public."

A rather singular incident happened to the Français a few years later. They had been for some time playing "The Siege of Calais" with enormous success, when an action was brought against one of the actors, named Dubois, by a surgeon, who had cured him of a certain recent illness. Dubois refused to pay, and, indeed, denied the debt. He was, accordingly, banished from the theatre; but his daughter, a young and pretty girl, interceded for him with the Duc de Frousac, and he was allowed to return. His companions, however, were furious, and refused to act with him; so "The Siege of Calais" was discon-

tinued. It was now the public's right to be angry—a privilege of which it fully availed itself; but the actors stood out, and, accordingly, met their punishment: they were all arrested—Dauberval, Lekain, Molé, Brizard, and Mdlle. Clairon—and sent to Fort l'Evêque. It was a day of triumph for the great *tragédienne*, who was accompanied to the door of her prison by all the noble ladies of Paris. The affair terminated thus: the author, Dubelloi, withdrew his piece; Dubois received a retiring pension, and the actors were set at liberty.

"Twenty years after this (added the Marquis) an adventure of a different kind happened at the Théâtre Français, where they were about to play 'The Marriage of Figaro.' Beaumarchais had more trouble in getting his piece played than he had in writing it; and the intrigue of his comedy, complicated though it be, is little, compared with that which attended its progress towards the stage. Will it be played or not?' was the question asked every where. The Court and the town divided

for or against. The manuscript was six times sent backwards and forwards from the police to the theatre, and from the theatre to the police. At last, on the 10th of May, 1783, when the parts had just been distributed to the actors, the King and Queen wished to see the piece, and it was read to them by Mdme. de Campan, from the author's manuscript.

"'It is detestable,' cried Louis XVI., after the reading was over. 'The Bastille must be destroyed before that piece can be played without dangerous consequences.'

"'Will it not be given; then?' said the Queen.

"'Certainly not; you may rest assured of it,' replied the King.

"The Queen was of a contrary opinion, and she contrived to gain over to her side the Count d'Artois, which was the more easily done, as he had recently conceived a passion for Mdlle. Coutat, to whom Beaumarchais had given the *rôle* of Susanne. In concert with M. de Vaudreuil and Mdme. de Polignac, the

favourite of Marie Antoinette, they agreed together to try and gain the King's consent to the representation of the comedy; and, after much difficulty, succeeded; so that, on the 27th of April, 1784, the 'Marriage of Figaro' was definitely announced for that evening. A crowd at once began to assemble, and soon filled all the approaches to the Odéon. There was such a tumult as was never heard before. The people increased every moment, and the windows were filled with eager faces, all amused to see men even scaling the balcony of the theatre by the help of ropes, in spite of the Garde Française and the Suisse, who were sent to watch the proceedings. By-and-by, carriages, with armorial bearings on them, appeared, bearing the Court and nobility, all anxious to do homage to the 'first night;' and at three in the afternoon not a place was to be had in the theatre. With great trouble I reached the *foyer*, and found a crowd of authors and celebrities assembled.

"'I trust,' said the Marquis de Bièvre, 'that this will not be like the first night of the 'Persifleur.'

"'Why?' asked Chamfort.

"'Because on that occasion the Père-siffleur had all his children in the theatre,' answered De Bièvre.

"Presently arrived Susanne and Cherubin, in the persons of Mdlle. Coutat and Mdlle. Olivier.

"'What do you think of her?' asked Mdlle. Coutat of Beaumarchais, after presenting to him Mdlle. Olivier.

"By way of answer, Beaumarchais embraced the young actress, who was certainly very pretty, with a fair skin, fair hair, and black eyes—a rare thing in a blonde. A naïveté full of *abandon*, innocence, and at times a shade of pensiveness, completed the charm of this young girl, whom death, alas! carried off three years after this. Beaumarchais was enchanted with the appearance of his character. 'Delicious!' he cried; 'I could fancy myself at Madrid.' All the actors

were at last assembled in the *foyer*, while the audience, the greater part of whom had not dined, made a horrible noise in the theatre until the overture commenced. Finally came the play, and then there was nothing but laughter and applause. The success was complete and triumphant. Mdlle. Coutat was superb in Susanne; and Préville embraced her on the stage, in the midst of all the applause."

After an absence from Paris of some years, which had been spent in exile with the Royal Princes, the Marquis returned and resumed his old play-going habits. "At this time," says he, '93, "the theatre had changed hands. The actors were no longer called the *comédiens ordinaires* of the King; they belonged to the people and played for the people. The theatre was called 'Le Théâtre de la République;' yet, notwithstanding, the actors held to their ancient traditions. They regretted royalty and the aristocrats, and had no pleasure in playing the political pieces presented to them. An author came one day to read a piece called,

'Le Jugement Dernier des Rois.' A member of the Convention was present as the author's friend. After the reading was over, Grandménil said to one of his comrades, 'If we receive it, and the others (the kings) come back, we shall be hanged.'

"'Would you prefer,' said the *Conventionnel*, 'to be hanged for not having received it?'"

Thermidor brought back joy and hope to artistes. They all came back triumphant after their long absence.

"I must tell you something about Mdlle. Coutat—which occurs to me at this moment," said the Marquis.

"Louise Coutat was not only a great actress but a charming woman. To a long experience of the world she united much natural *esprit* and the advantages of a good education. She was celebrated for the piquancy and charm of her conversation. After the representation of 'Pamela' she was arrested and taken to St. Pelagie, at the very time when Josephine La Pagerie de Beauharnais was an inmate. Their prison chambers were close together,

and an intimacy soon sprang up between the two captives. The gaiety of the actress helped to enliven the solitude of her companion; and at such times a smile that had something of hope in it would part the lips of the young Creole, and she would draw from her breast a talisman bearing these words:—'You will sigh and suffer; but hope, wait, and you will be queen of a great empire.' 'Ah!' she would cry, 'half of the prediction is accomplished; but how is it possible to realize the other?' 'You must hope and wait,' said Louise.

"Two years later Mdme. Beauharnais met Bonaparte for the first time; and all the world knows how the other part of the prophecy came to be fully realized. Mdlle. Coutat had, up to this time, continued to visit her companion in misfortune; but when a throne was placed between them, the actress was too well acquainted with etiquette, and knew the world too well, not to retire into the back ground. One evening, however, the Court being at St. Cloud, the company of the Français were called

there to play 'The Misanthrope.' The Célimene showed herself in all her glory, and was afterwards presented to Josephine, who received her with her accustomed grace and kindness, though gently reproaching her for her abandonment. Mdlle. Coutat was invited to breakfast the following day. But she had no sooner left the palace than Mdme. de Larochefoucault, lady of honour, interfered, and thought it her duty to observe to her Majesty that such an invitation was contrary to all rules of etiquette, and that, consequently, it might be displeasing to the Emperor. Josephine yielded to these representations, and it was decided that an excuse should be made to Mdlle. Coutat on her presenting herself. Accordingly, on the following morning, when the actress arrived, she was met by Mdme. de Larochefoucault, who informed her that the Empress would be unable to see her that day, as she had a violent *migraine*, and would be obliged to remain in bed; but that her Majesty had commissioned her (Mdme. de Larochefoucault) to act in her stead, and to

receive Mdlle. Coutat. The keen-wited actress, however, at once guessed the truth; and gracefully excused herself, saying that she herself had a breakfast engagement which she had forgotten, and that she had only driven to St. Cloud to inquire after the Empress. After many expressions of regret and respect, therefore, she re-entered her carriage and started for Paris; but was met by the Emperor, who, returning to St. Cloud, recognized Mdlle. Coutat, and stopped his carriage. 'I thought, Madame,' said he, 'that you were to breakfast with the Empress to-day?'

"'Sire, the health of her Majesty——'

"'Ah! yes, I had forgotten,' said Napoleon, smiling; 'but, since you came to breakfast with the Empress, will you remain and breakfast with the Emperor?'

"Shortly afterwards, Napoleon entered the palace of St. Cloud with Mdlle. Coutat, whom he presented to his wife. The *migraine* had entirely disappeared; Napoleon was in one of his rare moods of *abandon;* Mdlle. Coutat was dazzling, witty, and gay; and the breakfast

was charming. Mdlle. Coutat abandoned the scene of her triumphs at a comparatively early age. At thirty-seven she gave up the *rôles* of coquettes, and began to play the mothers; a few years afterwards she quitted the stage, but she left behind her a competent successor in the person of Mdlle. Mars, who at this period (1812) was in all the *éclat* of her beauty and talent. A perfect diction, a delicate raillery; rare ease, a mixture of mobility and grace, exquisite elegance—such were the elements of success all united in this incomparable model. And yet the commencement of her career was far from giving promise of the brilliant actress, the woman of tact, and of the great world. The first part she played was that of the brother of Jocrisse in the 'Désespoir de Jocrisse,' which made the fame and fortune of Brunet. This is the history of the piece which sent all Paris to the Théâtre Montansier. Two *littérateurs*, who were also men of learning and men of fashion—Aude, Knight of Malta, and formerly secretary to M. de Buffon, and Dorvigny, professor of ancient literature at the College Mazarin—

both lost place and fortune in the revolution of '89. Thrown together as much by talent as misfortune, they sought the stage as a refuge, and took to dramatic writing. At that time it was customary to pay the author a certain sum of money after the reading of his piece. This was his sole remuneration, and he was thus obliged to wait until the success of his work was exhausted—often a long time—before he could receive money for a fresh piece. Aude and Dorvigny were in this predicament, when one morning, while they were sitting in the *foyer* of the Théâtre Montansier deploring their wretched plight, they heard that a reading which was expected to take place that day was obliged to be put off in consequence of the illness of the author. A light broke upon Dorvigny. 'This is just the opportunity we wanted,' said he. 'The committee has not been warned, and will presently arrive. Let us take the author's place, and read ourselves.'

"'Read!' returned the other; 'but we have neither subject nor title.'

"'A subject?' replied Dorvigny, reflect-

ing. 'I have one; and here is a good title, 'Jocrisse!'

"'So be it,' said Aude. 'You shall read the first half and I the second. We will divide the money, and go and enjoy the evening *chez* Baucelin.'

"Ten minutes afterwards Aude and Dorvigny were seated before the committee, improvising a charming comedy in prose, with couplets, amid the laughter and applause of the assembly. When it was over, Brunet, left alone, unfolded the manuscript, looked at it, and was stupefied at seeing a quire of blank paper, on which was simply written the word 'Jocrisse!' Several days passed without any thing being heard of the authors, who, in the meantime, finding it utterly impossible to remember their improvisation, had decided to avow their trick, promising to set to work on another piece. Brunet, who had been delighted with his *rôle*, was in despair at hearing this news, and begged them still to try and recall the piece. Suddenly Dorvigny cried out, 'I have it, I have found my

Jocrisse; and this time he shall not escape me.' The piece was at once written, and came out a few days afterwards at the Montansier."

For a year I was one of the faithful of the orchestra stalls, where the Marquis never failed to occupy his usual seat. One night, however, his place was empty: the *spirituel* Marquis de Ximenes, the last *habitué* of the Théâtre Français, was no more. He had died while relating an anecdote of Mdlle. Coutat, to the *curé* of the parish!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LITERATURE OF TRIUMPH.

HERE are the singers this 15th of August, 1859—but where is the song? Grisettes and students are grouping under the Tuileries chestnuts,—workmen are shouting in the Barrière wine-shops,—ragpickers are tipsily musical in the Rue Moueffetard: but where are the words of fire? Here is another *Caporal*—but where is Béranger? Belmontet, in Imperial livery! the grisettes will none of him. His verses are not destined to reach the dark recesses of the *Drapeau Rouge*, where the *chiffonniers* are hoarsely grunting their content that France is glorious. The Poly-

technic boys are not stirred by the lyre of a footman. Yet they are stirred; even the heavy Auvergnats, waddling under the weight of their water-cans, are moved. As the wounded soldiers, in worn regimentals, lounge about the streets, eyes brim with tears and tender words follow them. While the oriflammes are grouped about the tall red pillars along the Boulevards, gawky country folk stare, but are mute. Why the *concierges* would join in a refrain—were there any refrain to join in! Here is a vast musical party, without music. Some million of lucifer-matches, but nothing to rub them upon: Jules Roquette pipes *La Milanaise*, and calls it a war song; but its music has not power to travel far beyond the modest precincts of his publisher's shop. Adolphe Morphey valiantly tries to awaken the national voice; but how can his countrymen appeal, with him, to the Venetians? M. Morphey's lyre promised these Venetians freedom from the tyrant, some weeks since; but what say the Venetians to M. Morphey now—if, indeed,

the Morphey muse ever charmed Venetians' ears? There is the *Ménage du Zouave* musically described in the cool evenings at the *Café des Ambassadeurs;* and from the *Ancien Café Morel* the excited Parisian may catch the vigorous notes of the trumpet of Marengo. But where shall we find the song of triumph?

The sense of triumph was never stronger than it is to-day among these mercurial millions of holiday-makers. They adore every uniform in the French army. They bear with the brutal swagger of the coarsest sapper. They are at the feet of every corporal. The drummers live in the hearts of their countrymen. Happy is the grisette who can lean upon the arm of a mahogany-headed Zouave; proud is the lady whose brother is a sergeant, wearing a shako, rusty from the sun of Italy. These would sing to their darling warriors some grand song of Solferino, some thrilling words of Magenta. There are sweet voices ready in all the Boulevard theatres to chant a great hymn to the army of Italy; but there is no hymn ready in Paris

—there is only Belmontet! We are told that great occasions bring forth great men; that in the womb of big events lie the men to dominate them. But the army of Napoleon the Third has entered Paris, amid mad excitement, under a heavy rain of tears, tented by ladies' pocket-handkerchiefs from the sun,—and the big event has brought forth no minstrel to lead a national song of praise. No supremely eloquent tongue has spoken; no thrilling harp has struck upon the highly charged atmosphere,—as a harp mournfully touched the national heart in 1848, when certain dead were borne along the gloomy Boulevards: as a darkly eloquent voice chanted the doom of the Sixteenth Louis!

Was the event, then, not a great one? Could people give those heavy sums for airy perches, whence at the risk of breaking their necks, they might see Napoleon's soldiers pass, without feeling, heart and soul, bound up with the glory of the troops? Could tens of thousands of people scramble through the

choking dust to St. Maur, to feast their eyes upon the dirty insolent Turcos—and still not care for the Turcos? We must beat about to find the meaning of all this street enthusiasm, unaccompanied by a word to rally the enthusiasts. Our natural allies (who are the most artificial people on the face of the earth —the born supreme manufacturers of artificial flowers) are easily excited, and are very fond of oriflammes, and plaster of Paris Victories, and columns of Legion of Honour nominations in the *Moniteur*. The sash of the prefect pleases them. The sound of the drum is their music of the spheres. They live out of doors, and they live for amusement. Now, the entry of a victorious army of their own countrymen into Paris must surely be considered a great addition to the day's amusement on the Boulevards. The tears and the handkerchiefs are part of the amusement. Amusement, at seventy francs a head (for a good seat), ought to be intense. It was intense accordingly. The day when some of these troops fired into the windows of peace-

ful citizens was put aside. The people would be merry; there were theatres and fireworks to come. A feast of glory, hot and hot, for the morning,—fiery eagles with their claws in gunpowder worlds rising just over the old National Assembly in the evening:—could any thing be more grateful to the Parisian heart? All that was wanted, we repeat, was the poet with his song, that there might be choruses on the way home at night,—choruses in the wine-shops,—choruses to enliven the already lively dances of the Closerie! To be glorious from the tassel of the cap to the heel of the *sabot*, and not to have a line to express the glory,—this was hard.

Rumours travelled on their stealthy way to account for this. Alphonse, your barber, had heard that the Emperor went to St. Maur two days before the entry of their troops, to regain their favour. The Turcos were angry with him that he had not allowed them to suck the blood from the throats of a few more Austrians. The Quartier St. Antoine was not satisfied: Louis had not freed Italy

from the Alps to the Adriatic. Very old men who could remember the great day when the spoils of Italian Museums were borne through the streets; when the Old Guard appeared, worn with the labour of a hundred rapid victories; and when the Little Corporal had put the iron crown of Lombardy upon his compact brow, saying, "Beware who touches it!"—old men, to whom these stirring times were distinct memories, shrugged their shoulders, over the game of triumph of the junior Empire. The troops had returned, according to the old men at the Invalides, after a mere taste of war. The affair was a fortunate one for Paris tradesmen; for the modellers in plaster; the gilders of eagles; the contrivers of Venetian twopenny lamps—but it would be forgotten on the 16th! Solferino was not an Austerlitz: Magenta was not a patch upon Marengo. Where, too, was Louis's Bridge of Arcola? Magenta, M. de Cassagnac answers. "Tut! tut!" exclaim the Invalides. Thus the old guard speaks to the new guard. And the impression among

sober-minded people in Paris is, that the number of plaster Victories about the Rue de la Paix is disproportioned to the occasion. It is true, the sober-minded observer says, that the *peuple* is in a state of furious effervescence; and that the spectacle of the wounded parading the Boulevards has touched the hearts of the people who paid sixty francs for a sight of the marching hospital, encouraged by the clang of cymbals and the deafening roll of drums—but the soul of France has not been stirred, or the minstrel to sing of her new glory would have touched his harp and cleared his throat ere this.

Still the triumphs of the Second Empire demand their interpreters. The passing excitement must be fed with print and paper of some kind. Words, sounding as the Zouave's trumpets, must be given to the citizens, who love the grandiose, the sublime: who cap mean little traders with lofty titles, and make an artist of a penny barber. Attitudes must be struck, to suit the cabman and the waiter—as they were struck by De

Morny, when in green and gold, at the head of the Legislative Corps, he met the hero of Solferino on his return from the war. The fleshing of the Third Napoleon's maiden sword must have its story told to the commissionaire as to the commissaire. In default of even an Arnault, an Amédée de Cesena must be called in.

"Confederated Italy," in weekly three-penny numbers—with a coloured representation of fierce Turcos by way of frontispiece, exactly suits the spasmodic pen of loyal Amédée. He starts in sharp short sentences, to do honour to the Achilles of St. Cloud. The words of Achilles, on the 1st of January, 1859, to the Austrian ambassador suddenly brought the Italian question to light. This question now "left the dominions of theory to enter the region of facts." Achilles' celebrated words were the lightning which predicted the storm. Vague rumours circulated. "People said on all sides that Austria was sufficiently abandoned by God, to prefer the fortune

of arms to the resolutions of diplomacy." Thus, in the midst of the reader's breathless excitement, M. de Cesena drops long letters and speeches into his book—these are the pauses in the loud song of praise. The praise is for every body. M. Baroche, in asking the Council of State for more soldiers, explained the reasons for this augmentation "in language as dignified as it was sober." The Corps Législatif was, according to M. de Cesena, "the living personification of the country" in this solemn crisis. Then follow more speeches: that the reader may gain breath to bear the "frightful rapidity" of subsequent events. The Austrian troops crossed the frontiers of Piedmont. Now the question which, on the 1st of January, had "left the domains of theory to enter the region of facts," went once more on its travels—leaving, on this occasion, "the regions of politics and diplomacy, to enter the domain of military facts." With a flourish of Cesena trumpets, the appeal of the Emperor to the French people, of the

3rd of May, is set forth in imposing type. This is the appeal in which his Majesty declared that Austria had carried matters to an extremity which left only two alternatives to Europe. She must be allowed to dominate to the foot of the Alps; or Italy must be freed from her cruel rule, to the Adriatic. More, Italy must be left to herself; she must not merely change her masters. How far the author pleased his Imperial master by printing these promises and views of the 3rd of May, when they might be compared with the position of affairs on the 15th of August, is a question for M. de Cesena's own judgment. He has experience in royal puffery; and in his description of the people waiting about the Tuileries to see Achilles go to the wars, in his gilded coach and with his silk tent, the court writer shows himself to be expert in his art. A little exaggeration is permissible. We are told that old and young—men women, and children, waited about till midnight to bless his Majesty; his Majesty being

comfortably bedded, while, in his honour, the old were courting rheumatism, and the young, consumption, at his palace-gates. As for subscriptions to the loan, and the applications to serve in Italy, it was impossible to write them down. The delight of the people knew no bounds. "For," writes M. de Cesena, Literary Trumpet to Napoleon the Third, "there was in this delirium of the masses an instinctive joy at the instalment of vengeance that France was about to take upon the plains of Lombardy and Piedmont, for that unfortunate defeat of 1815, the memory of which still troubles them, even in the grandeur and prosperity of the present hour. France will never forget Waterloo; she will remember it always, colouring with anger, and weeping in despair. This name will never fade from her memory. This idea will possess her in the midst of her triumphs and her *fêtes*—unless it be vouchsafed to her to tear the bloody page (written by treason and fate) from her history, with her victorious sword!

"They who think that France has for-

gotten, that she can forget, Waterloo, know nothing of her soul and her genius. They cannot understand her. She works her way calmly, but she remembers. Let her be made richer than any nation on the face of the earth has ever been, she will still remember. Let every thing be given to her, glory, power, liberty,—she will always remember. But let her be sent, for one day only, upon the battle-field, to take a last, a real revenge for Waterloo—then she might, she would forget[1]."

This is an official song, almost as clearly acknowledged as were the verses of Arnault when Marie Louise entered Paris. It was to pass under the eyes of Napoleon the Third's troops. Was the exciting reference to Waterloo meant to allay the martial ardour of the Camp of St. Maur? M. de Cesena is not without rivals.

[1] This is the master passion that was rankling in the heart of France, even when her triumphant army was re-entering Paris from Italy; it was this passion that drove the Emperor to war in 1870. And then his enemies denied its existence.

"Homage to the French army" appears upon the last page of the *Patrie*, in gigantic letters. It is M. L. P. Mongruel who takes his hat off to the heroes of Solferino, and offers them a dictionary of glory, for the small sum of two francs. Considering that M. Mongruel calls the campaign in Lombardy, Louis Napoleon's "War of Independence," we need not follow the vendor of forty-sous homage through his alphabetical arrangement of glory. His enthusiasm very closely resembles that of the man of business who lately advertised 800 African palms for sale, at the lowest possible price—considering that the Turcos and the Zouaves were at St. Maur. Edouard Fournier is delighted with this advertisement, and declares that France is the only country where the advertiser could be certain that he would sell his palms. "Glory," says the *chroniqueur*, "is not cheapened with us."

Still glory will have its cheap song. The deeds of Magenta and Solferino must be told to all. If there be no genius strong enough

to lead the nation in chorus, little pipes must be tuned. If even a song as strong as *La Casquette au pèr' Bugeaud* cannot be raised, cheap prose must soak the glory of Solferino into the dense masses of the villages. In the penny *Pays*, Granier de Cassagnac chants the glory of the French army and the Sovereign "who knows how to give and win great battles[2]." Concierges, Auvergnats, frequenters of forty-centime wine-shops, read flashy De Cassagnac, and go, happy, to the dark corners where poor Paris sleeps—for France is, in truth, the first country on the face of the earth, and they are part of France.

There is a five-centime — a half-penny public. It is a great, quick-witted, excitable public,—a public that shows its low caps over the tops of barricades when Paris is in a state of revolution. This halfpenny host christens public men damaging names—points coarse, but telling jokes—is the author of Plon-Plon,

[2] After his first reverse, his triumphs were forgotten: and he was both coward and traitor.

the Ros des Gueux, and other terrible nicknames: and is proud of its blouse.

Said Dr. S. R. P. Grandménil, "I will produce something that shall suit the *bourgeoisie* and the *peuple*. I'll start a penny "Victory!" *La Victoire* appeared accordingly, on the 10th of July, 1859, and included an account of the Battle of Solferino, together with official reports—all cut very handsomely from the daily papers. It had been suggested to the Doctor, it would appear, that he might find it difficult to make his journal a permanent one. "France might suffer a defeat!"

Thereupon the cruel Doctor proceeds to smother his unfortunate correspondent under a mountain of words. France must be victorious, and the Doctor launches his penny "Victory" with the utmost confidence, since even in times of peace he will have the victories of science and skill to chronicle. He professes, first and foremost, indeed, to chronicle the victories of the Franco-Italian army over the Austrians: but these victories failing,

he has a list of eleven other descriptions of victories of which he will be the trumpeter, including the victories of health over disease, of peace over atrocious war, of fraternal love over envious and jealous hatred. The first number (and the last) of the Doctor's "Victory" closes with the telegraph from Valeggio of the 7th of July, in which the armistice was announced! The penny "Victory" recording the triumphs of health over disease has not yet appeared. A more systematic and persevering chronicle of the Emperor's victories is that which appeared for many weeks as a supplement to the *Journal pour Tous*. Here a sober editor contents himself with a pleasantly-coloured narrative of events. But he is tame after the comprehensive Dr. Grandménil. That is to say, tame while dealing with glory; but when he bids us approach the room in Villafranca, and listen to the conversation of two sovereigns, he takes his readers firmly by the ear. These are strange times, indeed, when the doors of emperors' conference rooms are not closed

against the penny-a-liners of foreign journals! The Conference of Villafranca was supposed to be a secret one, but there were ears and eyes, it would appear, in every part of the room. How Louis Napoleon made his cigarettees, his notes, the words he spoke, and the replies of Francis Joseph, are known to every five-centimes reader of France. Surely Marshal Vaillant was not listening at the key-hole with a note-book in his hand, and a manifold writer waiting for him in his tent!

When Prince Napoleon carried the treaty to Verona, the conversation he had with the Emperor of Austria was heard by the omnipresent penny-a-liner. Just one tear his Imperial Majesty dropped upon the document in which he gave up Lombardy. And then, handing the stained parchment to the prince, his Majesty hoped his Imperial Highness would never be compelled to make a similar sacrifice. All this, the refuse of the Russian and other journals, is part of the blouse's war gospel. The one Imperial tear touches him, —the Zouaves have made the poor Emperor

of Austria cry! The French are the first people on the face of the earth! Anecdotes of the war are, of course, eagerly caught up by the five-centimes feeders of military enthusiasm. We can imagine the relish with which a Zou-Zou, lying on his stomach under his tent at St. Maur, read the following ingenious concoction from the *Monde Illustré*, hashed and flavoured by the editor of the *Journal pour Tous*:—

"On the eve of Captain P.'s departure to join the staff of the army of Italy, a retired colonel (an old family friend) paid him a visit. 'My dear friend,' said the old man, 'I don't like the Austrians since the last siege of Mantua. I was then a volunteer, seventeen years of age. One day I had wandered into the country, when I was surprised by a troop of Würmser's army, and a devil of a Croat, a major, shot me in the shoulder with a pistol. I was three months in hospital. I carried the ball to my old mother, who kept it twenty years as a family jewel. At her death I found this Croat's present, and here it is! Now, you must do me a great favour. 'Bide your time,' and when you see an opportunity with the Croats, borrow a soldier's gun, and plant this in a major's shoulder. Will you accept the errand?' Captain P. took the ball and promised to do his best. He kept his word. At Montebello, when he was General Forey's

aide-de-camp, he hoped several times to be able to carry out his errand. Twice he seized a gun, and twice he was disappointed. He could not come at the requisite major; so he was compelled to content himself by cutting his enemies on all sides with his Crimean sword. He waited for another opportunity. It was written that on the great day of Solferino his mission should be fulfilled. In the beginning of General Forey's engagement our captain received orders to go with an escort, bearing a message to the left brigade. Suddenly they came across a body of Croats, separated from their regiment. 'Croats!' the captain cried! 'this is, perhaps, the colonel's opportunity.' A gun left upon the battle-field was given to him, and he dropped the ball of 1797 into it.

"His escort attacked the Croats. In the midst of the fight, he suddenly perceives an officer pointing a pistol at him. Swift as lightning he raises his gun, and knocks the officer off his horse. The Croats, seeing their commander wounded, retreat. The captain jumps to the ground, and runs to the wounded man. It was a major, and his arm was broken near the shoulder.

"'Major,' said the captain, 'you were going to kill me, and I disturbed your aim. I will have you carefully conveyed to the hospital of my division—only I must beg a little service of you.' 'A favour to you from me?' said the Austrian, surprised. 'Yes. You must return me the ball that I put into your shoulder, and which our surgeons will extract. I must return it to an old colonel in Paris, who lent it to me. Excuse me now, major, I have orders for the right wing. We shall meet

presently.' And P. jumped upon his horse and galloped away on his errand.

"On the morrow of the victory the captain saw the major, and received back the ball. 'Those tevels of French!' cried the major, 'they kill you, but they make you laugh!' After the 15th of August Colonel R. will have his bullet religiously returned to him by Major of the Staff P——."

Stories of this description are honey to the bees—the workers—of Paris. With anecdotes of this flavour ingenious editors lard lean victories, till a skirmish swells to the proportions of a general engagement. It is impossible to persuade a Frenchman that the wildest story, if it illustrates Gallic powers, is *de la blague*. The readers of the *Omnibus* read "The Zouaves in Italy," by Pierre Zaccone, from week to week, and receive the author's exaggerations as so many faithful portraits. Yet M. Zaccone's story is about as valuable as a picture of the Zouaves, as the penny "History of Italy under Austrian Domination;" by MM. Ponson du Terrail and Paul de Lascaux, is acceptable as a standard history. Is it possible, with M. de la

Guerronnière ensconced in the Rue Bellechasse (nibbing every pen to his master's taste), to write impartially of the war in Italy? MM. du Terrail and de Lascaux may deal with Francis the First and Charles the Fifth (and they are capable of marshalling facts with skill and effect), but they must touch the Italian laurels of the two Napoleons according to the official pattern. They must be inspired—in a police-office.

It is true that, for the moment, the blouses are not anxious to study *sou*-history. They require highly seasoned food in the torrid regions of enthusiasm to which they have transported themselves. The *Journal à Cinq Centimes* hits their case perfectly when the editor gives them a memoir of the Duke of Magenta; when he declares in another page that he reproduces a glowing description of the French soldier from the *New York Courier and Inquirer* "with legitimate pride," and when he adds the story of "Masaniello; or, the Deliverance of a People," as a *pièce de résistance* of his cheap banquet. The American

editor lays the flattering unction on in thick and solid lumps; the Frenchman gravely receives it, asserting that he can conscientiously declare it to be only a part of that which is legitimately due to him.

But the most dashing, impudent, rollicking note of triumph which the war in Italy produced, was that which was headed by a figure of a running Zouave, with his bugle to his mouth. The "Zou-Zou," as the broad-breeched pet of the Parisians is called, had at last given his name to a journal. He was to inspire printers every week. Jokes were to be made for him, and his own doings were to be told in pithy stories. His morals (ragged, it is to be feared, as his flag) were to form the bases of *mots* and apophthegms. He was to become an institution. In *historiettes*, lively and giddying as the *bâton* of his drum-major, his adventures were to be set before the world; and all for five centimes weekly! The army of Italy has had one very lively result at least—it has produced the *Petit Zou-Zou*.

The *Zou-Zou* included, of course, *bizarre* epigrams, flavoured for the camp. "Love," says the *Zou-Zou*, "is a torch that lights part of man's life. When he has seen enough, he marries. Hymen is the extinguisher of love." The *Zou-Zou's* natural audacity leads him, now and then, to a serious reflection. Here is one:—"The dreams which chance realizes are lies which tell the truth." The *Zou-Zou*, in short, comes in humble guise before us,—but I am not certain that he is not the best interpreter of the truths of the time,—of all this amusement without reflection,—of Italy delivered in threepenny numbers by Court writers, but left to shift for her liberty by Napoleon when she had given him the laurels he coveted.

The shop-windows were crowded with Chasseurs, and Zouaves, and Turcos, lithographed, photographed, or reduced to the peaceful occupation of ornamenting snuff-boxes and portemonnaies. There was a touching print in the Rue de Rivoli, where a

wounded Zouave was nursed by a good sister,—and which bore this title (intended to open the pockets of the frequenters of Meurice's), "A very angel truly." Cham drew some lively sketches of the pet soldiers of the Second Empire; and the Parisian's purse was tempted by sumptuous albums, in which the Emperor and his army were portrayed in startling *tableaux*. The *Charivari* was moderately amusing at the expense of the Italians and their lemonade. There were ginger-bread crowns "de Rheims" lying in tempting baskets opposite the Tuileries. The people cared little about the quarrel between Marshals Canrobert and Niel: they soon remarked that there was not a reference to Italy upon any of the lath and plaster or wooden triumphal arches which shadowed the road of the victorious army's march.

There is not a song—there is not a cry—that will recall to the minds of Frenchmen the 14th of August, 1859. Two days of

delightful show were spent; Paris was crowded; and the shopkeepers (worshippers of the Emperor while trade is brisk) were satisfied.

We now approach the LITERATURE OF DEFEAT.

END OF VOL. I.

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